ADMINISTRATION REPORT OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH (1878-79 – 1889-90)

Volume II

Edited by

Dipak Kumar Chaudhuri

TRIPURA STATE TRIBAL CULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
&
MUSEUM

GOVERNMENT OF TRIPURA
AGARTALA.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, 1878-79 -- 1890

VOLUME II

EDITOR
DIPAK KUMAR CHAUDHURI

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FOREWORD

Tribal Research Institute of the Government of Tripura has been engaged in publication of rare books, historical documents, research papers and other such valuable documents/books. The reports of the Political Agency of Tripura which was sent to the Bengal Government from 1872 onward contained a lot of valuable information about history, culture, administrative setup and other details which are very useful in understanding and appreciating the cultural demography of this beautiful State. It was a long felt need for publication of these rare documents containing the confidential reports of the Political Agency.

2. I am happy that Shri Dipak Kumar Chaudhuri has taken pain to collect these rare documents, compile them and also analyse the reports of the Political Agency. The analysis of the reports has been done meticulously by the author.

3. I am sure the present publication would be of great assistance and help to reserach scholars, students of History, Political Science and other related subjects.

Agartala,
March, 1996.

(D. K. Tyagi)
Commissioner,
Tribal Welfare.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This is to acknowledge my gratitude to the staff of the National Archives of India, New Delhi, who helped me in collecting all the Reports published in this volume. I am particularly indebted to the authorities of the National Archives of India, who, in a letter, No. F. No. 11/93-R. R., dated 26 April 1994, gave me the permission to publish these Reports for academic pursuit. The relevant portion of the letter is given below :

... I am desired to inform you that this department has no objection to the material being published by you for academic purposes. However, you have to acknowledge the Department for this material in your book and a copy of the same may be sent to this department after its publication on complimentary basis as desired under the National Archives of India Historical Research Rules. 1982.

Dated 2nd March, 1996.
Department of History,
Tripura University,
Agartala.

Dipak Kumar Chaudhuri

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the volume II of the collection of the ADMINISTRATION REPORTS OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH. These were annual confidential reports, which the Political Agents of Hill Tipperah had sent to the Bengal government between 1878-79 and 1889-90. While the volume I includes only six such reports, sent between 1872 and 1877-78, prepared by the Political Agents themselves, the present one covers the rest of the reports, - altogether twelve in number, - all prepared by the Assistant Political Agent, Uma Kanta Das. Late in 1878, the Government of India abolished the separate post of the Political Agent of Hill Tipperah, and created the post of an Assistant Political Agent, while the District Magistrate of the British district of Tipperah was made the Ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah. As such, Uma Kanta Das, who was appointed as the Assistant Political Agent, and remained in the same post for nearly twelve years, submitted all his reports to the Ex-Officio Political Agents, who, then, with their observations and minor modifications in some cases, sent them for onward transmission to the Bengal Government.

Thus, the two volumes together present all the eighteen reports, which sum up the activities of the Political Agency in Tripura, during its tenure of 19 years, i. e., from 1871 to 1890. The importance of these reports as primary source materials for the history of Tripura in the late 19th century, needs hardly any explanation or repetition. But as history of any period cannot be comprehended in a piecemeal fashion, the historical introuction, beginning with section II of the Editor's Note, already produced in volume I, has once again been reporduced in this volume. We hope, the reader would have some ideas from it of the background and complexities of relations between the Political Agency and the Tripura Raj. In addition, a brief resume of all the eighteen reports of the Political Agency will also be found in this volume, though those of the first six, viz., the Report of 1872, of 1873-74, of 1874-75, of 1875-76, of 1876-77, and of 1877-78, have already been published in volume I. Our intention is to make this volume a comprehensive one, and useful to those who have not seen or read the earlier volume[1].

II

The late 19th century, or, at any rate, the period between 1871 and 1890, formed the "Great Divide" in the history of Tripura (known at that time as the Hill Tipperah), when one era ended and another began. In the year 1871, the first ever Political Agency was set up at Agartala, the State capital, while in 1890, the Agency was abolished. In between was a period of covert conflict of two antithetical forces : the forces of change, represented by the British Political Agents, and the forces of tradition, represented by the Tripura Raj, under Maharaj Birchandra Manikya (1862-1896). Out of this conflict, however, gradually emerged a modern Tripura. The two decades of the Political Agency, thus, constituted the transitional phase of Tripura to modernisation.

Curiously, Tripura had never had any treaty relations with the British, under which the latter could station any Political Agent or Resident in the State. The English East India Company first came into contact with the State early in 1761, as an aide of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal. The territory of Tripura, at that time, was clearly divided into two parts : the hill portion in the east (which happens to be present Tripura); and the plain portion in the west. The Rajas of Tripura were independent, in the hill portion, which was called, up to 1865, "the Independent Tipperah," but mere zemindars, in the plain portion, known since 1729, as the "Chakla

Roshnabad", under the Bengal Nawabs. It was over the question of the payment of revenue of the Chakla Roshnabad that the Nawab fell out with Krishna Manikya, the then Raja of Tripura. In a bid to punish the defaulting Raja, Mir Qasim sought the help of the Company fauj.

The Company had just begun its expansionist programme. It had already secured the districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong from Mir Qasim in return for its support to him to occupy the musnad of Bengal. It, however, desperately needed money both to maintain its fauj and finance its local investment. Each of the factories of the Company, east of the Meghna river, including that of Dacca, was dependent on the Chittagong revenue. In its effort to increase the revenue, the Company was considering every possible means, including a further extension of its territorial rights and influences. Mir Qusim's appeal to help him against the Raja of Tripura, thus provided a possible opportunity to the Company to enlarge its Chittagong territories.

The Company fauj marched against the Raja of Tripura in Februry 1761, and occupied Comillah, the head-quarters of the Raja in the plains. Krishna Manikya surrendered without a fight. The Company now made a fresh settlement with him regarding the revenue of the Chakla Roshnabad. But its expectations to enlarge its Chittagong territories did not materialize, as the Chakla was handed back to the Nawab, on the assurance that the cost of the expedition would be defrayed. [2]Interestingly, in this settlement with Krishna Manikya, there was no reference to the hill portion of Tripura, as the Company officials found that, the area was of little economic value, covered as it was with impenetrable jungles and marshes, and with very little cultivation. Consequently, the Raja remained independent in the hills as before.

The political complexion of Bengal soon took a new turn in 1765 when the Company secured the dewani rights over Bengal. Since then, the Company legitimately began to collect revenue from the Chakla Roshnabad, which was later permanently settled in 1793, along with other zemindaries of Bengal.

The Company, however, never interfered in the affairs of the Independent Tripura, even though it had assumed the direct administration of Bengal as early as 1772. Notwithstanding, following the nawabi tradition, it began to grant sunnad, from 1785 onwards, to every new Raja of Tripura, and thereby accord its recognition. But once thus recognised the Raja remained truely independent in the hill territory. The Raja of Tripura, to quote [3]Mackenzie :

who is an ordinary zemindar on the plains, reigns as an inependent prince over 3000 square miles of upland, and was for many years a more absolute monarch than Scindia or Puttiala, owing no law but his sovereign will, bound by no treaty, subject to no control, safe in his obscurity from criticism and reform.

Indeed, the Company government so scrupulously maintained its policy of non-interference with regard to Tripura that even when some over-zealous bureaucarts tried to end this independence, the former itself came to the rescue of the Tripura Raj. Early in the 19th century, the Lieutenant-Governor himself declared in unequivocal terms that the Raja of Tripura had an independent territory in the hills.[4]

III

All this, however, changed in the period after the Transfer of Power. In 1865, the British Government took a decision to change the name of the state from "Independent Tipperah" to "Hill Tipperah", and in 1870, it was decided that a Political Agent would be stationed there. This was a complete reversal of the policy which the Company had pursued for nearly a century, and Tripura suddenly came face to face to a situation where

her independence was being threatened. Now, why was this reversal of policy ?

The decision to station a Political Agent in Tripura was, in fact, prompted by two major factors : one ideological, and the other, political.

With the end of the Company rule in 1858, the British Crown stood out as the Paramount Power of India, the successor of the Mughals. The Princely States of India, which, during the Company rule, had been theoretically "foreign states", now came to be regarded as "feudatories", or vassal states. Though the Princes were assured, by the Proclamation of the Queen, of their dynastic and other privileges, it was made clear that Indian under 'direct rule' and India under 'Princely rule', would constitute, in effect, one single politico-economic unit, and that, it would be the duty of the Paramount Power to set right abuses in the Princely States. This was a departure from the policy of the Company which had virtually left the states alone so long as they remained loyal, and refused to interfere in their internal administration, except in cases of extreme misgovernment. But now, as a general rule, the British Government took upon itself the responsibility of maintaining 'good government' in the States. There was, however, a strong conviction that the only 'good government' was the British Government, and the only way to promote 'good government, in the Princely States was to make them follow the British model of administration. The prerequisite for this was some sort of "indirect rule" of the states. And the instrument of this "indirect rule" was found in the Political Agents, who were to "aid and advise" the Princes, without directly interfering in their administration. Thus, the Political Agents were entrusted with the task of initiating British system of government in the Princely states. The period between 1870 and 1890, in particular, witnessed this reforming zeal of the British authorities, and that was partly the reason why so many Political Agents were appointed in the 1870s. It was Lord Mayo who harnessed this reforming attitude, and it was he himself, who, in 1869, first advocated the necessity of appointing a Political Agent for Tripura. Thus, ideologically, the decision to station a Political Agent in Tripura was not an isolated event, but a part of a general programme of reform of the Princely States under the guidance of British officials.

This ideological factor, however, does not make the political factor oblivious. There was, indeed, an urgent political necessity at that time to station a British officer in Tripura. The eastern frontier of Bengal was beset with the chronic problem of Lushai-Kuki raids in which Tripura became unwittingly involved to the detriment to the British interests.

Tripura was bounded, at that time, by the British districts of Sylhet and Cachar in the north, Chittagong in the south, and Tipperah (which included a portion of the Chakla Roshnabad) in the west. In the east, the State's boundary was not properly defined, where it gradually merged into the eastern hills, inhabited by the wild Lushai-Kuki tribes. The Rajas of Tripura had always claimed suzerainty over these tribes and for many years carried on a desultory warfare with them. But the independent nature of these tribes made them very recalcitrant subjects. Consequently, whenever the Tripura army raided rebel villages of the Lushai-Kukis, there were counter-raids by the Lushai-Kukis on Tripura-villages. In course of their raids, these tribes frequently swooped upon British villages near the border, plundered, burnt, and then carried away both men and women as captives. The frontier villages of Sylhet and Cachar on the one hand, and of Chittagong on the other, were particularly affected by such raids in the 1860s.

To a certain extent, the very socio-economic condition of these tribes, particularly their perennial shortage of women and servants, made regular inroads into the settled country a necessity. But the Bengal Government blamed the Raja of Tripura for most of the troubles. In their opinion, it was the Raja's continuous warfare with

the tribes that led to the counter-raids by the tribes. As the tribes were unable to differentiate between the Tripura villages and British villages near the border, they raided the latter along with the former. The Bengal Government also suspected that some of these raids might be manipulated by the Tripura Raj, as it was not happy with the boundaries of Sylhet and Cachar, which were unilaterally fixed by the British. It was even suspected that some officials of Tripura carried on trade of arms with the Lushais.

The Lushai-Kuki menace became so great during 1869-70 that the British Government sent a punitive expedition against them. But it failed to produce the desired result. The Bengal government then proposed a fresh expedition. Lord Mayo, however, turned down the proposal; he favoured a policy of winning over the tribes through friendly negotiations. The Bengal Government was requested to appoint a well-qualified officer for the job.

The Bengal Government was, however, convinced that no single officer, located at any point between Cachar and Chittagong, would be able to cope with more than one set of Lushais. Hence, in a letter, dated 17 December 1869, [4.1] the Bengal Government proposed the appointment of a chain of three officers, - one on the Cachar side, one on the Chittagong side, with a Political Agent in Tripura in the middle. The estimated cost for implementing this proposal was also submitted to the Government of India. This was, in fact, the first ever concrete proposal for the appointment of a Political Agent in Tripura.

Lord Mayo, in any case, was against stationing of any British officer among the Lushais. But he agreed on the appointment of a Political Agent for Tripura when it was pointed out that a British officer in Tripura was necessary not only to control the Raja's relations with the Lushai-Kukis, but also to open up the State (of which nothing was known) for initiating reforms[5]. The decision of the Government of India was communicated to the Bengal Government in June 1870.

Birchandra Manikya, the ruling prince of Tripura, was naturally opposed to the move, and, between April and August 1870, he sent as many as three remonstrations to the Government of India, expressing his apprehension that it would undermine his authority and end the independence of the Raj[6]. The Government of India, however, assured him that it had no desire to interefere with his administration, or with the lawful exercise of power which the Raja had enjoyed so far; and that the Political Agent would only "aid and advise" him in matters of administration. The Raja was also assured that the entire cost of the Agency would be borne by the British Government, though it was not the usual practice[7].

IV

A.W.B. Power was appointed as the first Political Agent of Tripura on July 3, 1871. He was of the rank of a fourth grade Deputy Commissioner, on Rs. 1000 per month. He arrived at Agartala on August 1, and with his assumption of the office began the period of the Political Agency in Tripura.

The Agency consisted, apart from the Agent himself, of an English clerk on Rs. 70 a month, an orderly and one duftry chaprasee, each on Rs. 6. The Raja provided the Agent with an escort of 20 sepoys, and rendered all the assistance for the construction of a residence for the Agent, for which the Bengal Government had sanctioned Rs. 3000. A house was also built for the clerk. The Agency was initially placed under the supervision of the Commissioner of Dacca, but later, on November 1, 1880, it was transferred to that of the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

The duties assigned to the Political Agent were broadly of two categories[8] : one relating to the Raja's relations with the frontier tribes, and the other, regarding the Raja's internal administration. The Agent was instructed to travel about the frontier with a view to open friendly communications with the various tribes ; he was also to control the Raja's relations with them, particularly the Lushai-Kukis, so that the Raja could not undrtake any punitive action against them.without the prior approval of the Bengal government. The Agent was also entrusted with the task of laying the frontier of the State in the east. With regard to the internal administration, the Agent was asked, without directly interfering, to acquaint himself with, and report on, every aspect of the Raja's administrarion, - civil, criminal, judicial, revenue, military and the police. He was also to counsel the Raja to initiate reforms where necessary, and to bring to the notice of the Government any gross injustice, ourtages and barbarity.

V

The period of the Political Agency in Tripura can be divided into two phases. The first phase lasted from August 1871 to October 1878 ; and the second phase from November 1878 to April 1890. During the first phase, altogether five European Agents had run the Agency. Their names and tenures are as follows :

Name of the Political Agent	From	To
1. A. W. B. Power	1st August 1871	2 February 1874
2. Capt. E. G. Lillingston	16 February 1874	26 April 1875
3. Capt. W. L. Samuells	26 April 1875	26 February 1876
4. T. E. Coxhead	26 February 1876	26 April 1877
5. C. W. Bolton	26 April 1877	28 October 1878

(During the tenure of Coxhead, however, J. F. Bradbury had been in charge of the Agency for a brief period of three months, - from February to April, 1877).

The post of a separate Political Agent for Tripura was abolished by a notification, published on July 20, 1878. In its place, the post of an Assistant Political Agent, of the rank of a fourth grade Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector, on Rs. 500 a month, was created. The Magistrate of the British district of Tipperah was made the Ex-officio Political Agent of Tripura, with instructions that he should visit Agartala twice a year, and stay there for a fortnight each time. The Government of India was in favour of an European Deputy Magistrate for the post of the Assistant Political Agent. But the Bengal Government proposed an Indian Deputy Magistrate for the post, on the ground that there was a severe shortage of European officers of the rank. Accordingly, an Indian Deputy Magistrate of the Bengal Civil Service, Uma Kanta Das, was selected for the post.

U. K. Das took charge from C. W. Bolton on 28 October, 1878 and with him began the second phase of the Political Agency in Tripura. Das remained in office all through the second phase, i. e., he was the first as well as the last Assistant Political Agent of Tripura. There were, however, nine Ex-officio Political Agents during the same period. They were : -

Names of the Ex-officio Political Agents	From	To
1. F. Jones	1878-79	1879-80

2.	G. Toynbee	1880-81	1881-82
3.	J. A. Hopkins	1882	1883
4.	H. G. Cooke	1883	1884
5.	F. H. B. Skrine	1884	1885
6.	S. S. Jones	1885	1886
7.	J. C. Price	1886	1888
8.	A. H. Collins	1888	1889
9.	R. T. Greer	1889	1890

The Second phase of the Agency in Tripura came to an end on April 15, 1890, when the Bengal Government transferred the service of Das to the Maharaja of Tripura, who made him the minister. The post of the Assistant Political Agent was, for the time, kept in abeyance, the entire political charge of Tripura being vested in the Ex-officio Political Agent. The Agency in Tripura was later abolished.

VI

During the first phase of the Agency, that is, between 1871 and 1878, nearly all the major tasks assigned to the Agents were completed. During this period, Birchandra cooperated with the Agents, and to some extent, became a willing tool of reform. One reason for this willingness and cooperation was his apperhension that unless he cooperated, his territories might be annexed. [9]The other reason was related to the controversy that arose over his proper title. Ever since he was recognised by the British Government as the de jure Raja of Tripura in 1869, [10]Birchandra began to call himself the Maharaja. But the Bengal Government bluntly told him that his proper title was the Raja, and not the Maharaja, and that the higher title of the Maharaja might be bestwed on him at a future date, after assessing his performance as a ruler. This admonition, coupled with his anxiety regarding the annexation of his territory, if he failed as a ruler, prompted Brichandra to act according to the counsel of the Political Agents.

As a result, this phase witnessed a host of activities. The eastern boundary of the State was fixed (though Birchandra was not happy with it), and a chain of frontier posts were erected, both to monitor the movements of the Lushai-Kukis and to protect the State from their raids. In internal administration, a series of reforms, cast on the model of British administration, were initiated. Thus, for the first time a Municipality was established at Agartala (1871); elementary education for both boys and girls began (since 1872); written laws were introduced (1873-74); arrangements for public health were made with the opening of a hospital (1873) at Agartala; a number of petty taxes were abolished; and finally, the Domestic Slavery was prohibited (1878).

All the Reports of the Political Agents during this early phase acclaimed Birchandra as a great reformer, and the British Government, in recognition of his efforts, to introduce reforms and good government, bestowed on him the title of the Maharaja, in October 1878, as a personal distinction.

This was, however, the turning point in Birchandra's relations with the Political Agency, which gradually grew worse during the second phase of 1878-1890. Despite the cordial relations during the first phase, a conflict was in the process of developing between Birchandra and the Agents over the financial administration of the State. The revenue of the State, when Power came, was only a paltry sum of Rs. 1,45,000. The zemindaries yielded nearly Rs. 6,00,000. But Birchandra's expenditure was much larger. It was estimated by the Agency that the annual deficit of the State was more than a lakh of rupees. The deficit was customarily

met by borrowing money from money-lenders. The result was a perpetual indebtedness of the Maharaja. Though the actual amount of the debt was always kept secret, it was believed that the total amount was more than five lakhs in 1877-78, and over eleven lakhs in 1883-84; to this was added a huge amount of interest, which was paid every year.

As the reform programme and good government ultimately depended on the availability of funds, the Agents, from the very beginning, had been insisting on certain changes in the administration of finance, or at any rate, on two specific things : one was to increase the income of the State by changing the prevailing revenue system, and by opening up new sources of revenue; the other was to effect economy in administration, by way of reduction of the number of employees, and curtailment of expenditure, particularly, the personal expenditure of the Maharaja. Time and again, the Agents advised Birchandra about the necessity of a proper budget for financial administration of the State. But all the counselling went in vain.

The chief characteristic of the revenue system of the State was farming. All the sources of revenue, including the petty ones, were farmed out. The farmers were in most cases, the nobility of Tripura, known as 'Thakurs', who were related to the Maharaja, in some way or other. They were granted farms on very low terms. These people usually sub-let their farms to the Bengalis of the neighbouring British districts. Consequently, not only a good portion of revenue was lost to the treasury, but a substantial portion was also drained out of the State. The Agents had repeatedly advised Birchandra to do away with the farming system and replace it with direct (khas) management. But on some pretext or other, the latter, despite his loss of revenue, refused to change the system.

The Agents also found Birchandra indifferent to opening up of new sources of revenue. The Agents in general, and C. W. Bolton in particular, had pointed out the immense potential of tea plantation in the Kailashahar region, where indigenous tea-bushes were found in abundance. But no initiative was ever taken in that direction during Birchandra's rule.

Birchandra was found to be equally indifferent to the question of reducing expenditure. His administration, according to the Agency Reports, was unnecessarily large, and though the pay of the officials were only nominal, they always remained in arrears. With a view to reducing the unnecessary expenditure, the Agents had always recommended a reduction in the number of officials. But Birchandra paid no heed to the advice.

Birchandra was particularly against any scrutiny of his private expenditure by foreign Agents. All the Agents reported that in spite of the financial stringency, the Maharaja had been wasting money on his very large entourage, including poets, musicians, painters, wrestlers, hakims and kabirajas, and on other amusements.

What was more alarming was the fact that there was no proper account of any expenditure. It was to remedy this situation that the Agents had been insisting on preparing a budget, where both the income and expenditure, including the personal expenditure of the Maharaja, would be shown. To Birchandra, this demand of the Agents was an affront on his dignity. As a result, no budget was ever prepared, though Hunter had told us otherwise. [11] The Agency however, was supplied with yearly statements of revenue received from all sources.

The cumulative effects of all this were the volumes of complaints against Birchandra, which we find during the second phase of the Agency. With the passing of every year, the complaints became louder and louder. Birchandra was accused of dissipating public money and of obstructing reforms, particularly, in his revenue administration. True, one major social reform took place during this phase, - the prohibition of Sati in Tripura

in 1889, - and the Maharaja was duly congratulated on that count. But the growing complaints against his revenue administration and his personal expenditure soon made the Bengal Government convinced that some sort of direct interference was the only way out to save the State from financial ruin. J. C. Price, the Ex-officio Political Agent, in his Report for the year 1887-88, even went to the extent of saying that Birchandra was "a puppet" in the hands of his officials, and as such, he should be removed from the throne.

Birchandra was quite aware of the hostile atmosphere around him, though he did not know the contents of the Agency-Reports, which were strictly confidential. In a bid to show that his financial condition was not as critical as depicted, he finally submitted, showing in a lump, a rough estimate of the probable receipts and expenditures for the year 1888-89. This rough extimate, the first ever submitted by Birchandra to the British, disclosed that his personal expenditure was far greater than the expenditure of the State. This only made the matter worse for Birchandr. D. R. Lyall, the commissioner of the Chittagong Division, wrote :[12]

"It has long been known that it was the Maharaja's personal expenditure that was bringing ruin on his State, but until now all figures commented with expenditure had been jealously withheld. Things are goning from bad to worse, and it is, I hold, the duty of the Government to interfere".

The Government, in any case, was still hesitant to directly interfere in Tripura. The cooperation of the Maharaja was necessary in order to execute the programme of reform. Hence, it was decided that the Ex-officio Political Agent, R. T. Greer, would be sent to Agartala, with a personal letter from the Lieutenant-Governor, to persuade the Maharaja to act as per recommendations of the Agency. Accordingly, Greer came to Agartala in August 1889, and presented the letter to Birchandra, and after appraising him of the situation, made him agree to appoint a Minister, in consultation with the Agent. The Maharaja agreed to give the Minister full authority both over the State and the zemindaries, and not to remove him without the knowledge of the Agent. But immediately after the departure of Greer from Agartala, Birchandra denounced the whole agreement. In a letter to the Lieutenant-Governor, he complained that Greer had virtually compelled him to agree to a proposal, which would, in effect, end his independence. A lengthy and somewhat unpleasant corresposdence then followed, and finally Birchandra withdrew his complaints, and accepted the proposal of Greer.

Towards the close of 1889, Birchandra informed the Bengal Government that he was willing to appoint the Assistant Political Agent, Uma Kanta Das, as his Minister, if the Government had no objection. The latter readily agreed, as Das was not only a trusted officer but well acquainted with the problem of State also. On April 15, 1890, Das was relieved of the duties of the Assistant Political Agent, and he joined the Maharaja's service as the Minister. There was no need to continue the Agency in Tripura, as one of the trusted and experienced officers of the Bengal Government was now in full charge of the affairs of Tripura. Accordingly, the Agency was withdrawn after a period of 19 years.

VII

The Reports, as a whole, provide us with a fairly comprehensive picture of political, social and economic condition of Tripura in the late 19th century. Each Report contains, as we shall see, three major components : one, the account of the compulsory tour of the Agent in the interior of the State, which lasted on an average, about 70 days a year; two, important events of the year, including reforms introduced; and three, observations of the Agents on different aspects of the administration and recommendations for further improvement.

Interpolating these were informations about people, living both in the plains and on the hills, and their socio-economic conditions. From 1877-78 onwards, we find, in addition, vital informations on weather and crops, prices of food grains, wages, trade and commerce, and manufacture and mines. Particular attention was given on the administration of revenue, justice, army and police, education and public health, which were often supplement by statistical tables.

It is interesting to note that out of the eighteen annual Reports sent by the Agency, between 1871 and 1890, only six (those of 1872, 1873-74, 1874-75, 1876-77 and 1877-78) were prepared by different Political Agents themselves. All the rest were the works of a single person, the Assistant Political Agent, Uma kanta Das, who remained in the same post for nearly twelve years. These were, of course, occasionally supplemented with comments from the Ex-officio Political Agents.

Since all the Reports have been produced in the present volume in original, except certain annexures, mentioned in the Reports, but not found, below is a brief resume, covering only some important features, of each individual Report, for the reader's convenience.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1872

Prepared by : A. W. B. Power, the Political Agent
Submitted on : October 31, 1873

This was the first Report of the Political Agency in Tripura. Being the first Report, it was virtually a description of the State - mode of the government, nature of administration, condition of the military and police, economy, population, and education. Power's description was not always accurate, but nevertheless, very important, because, for the first time, the State and its people received attention from the outside world. Power, for example, put the total area of the State at 3,870 square miles, which was not correct. Similarly, he estimated that the total population of Tripura was about 35,000 only, which was again not correct. But apart from these two gross inaccuracies, Power's description seems to be a fair assessment.

Power described the mode of government in Tripura as despotic and patriarchal, where written laws were not known, and as such the Raja's word was law. For almost everything, e. g., "for building a pucca house, for digging a tank, for the use of palkee at a wedding," and the like, the Raja's permission was required. Power attributed interference in such matters to two causes, - "one being that the concession of such privileges is a source of revenue, and secondly, the power of reservation keeps up the Chief's actual authority." There was, however, no complaint against such practices.

The nature of administration was like a family arrangement. Most of the officials were related to the Raja, either by marriage, or in some other ways. Some of the most dignified posts were hereditory. The pay of the officials were mere nominal, and this, according to Power, compelled them to take resort to dishonest means. There was no control over them and everybody was intersted in concealing the sortcomings of his colleague. In such a situation, any attempt to introduce "a reform which touches the pockets of these, brings down a storm of in-door influence," with which it was very difficult to cope with.

On the advice of the Agent, however, for the first time, two officers from outside were appointed in higher posts. One of them was Nilmani Das, formerly Sub-registrar of Comillah, who was given the post of Dewan, and the other Durga Prasad Gupta, formerly Civil Court Ameen of Brahmanbaria, who was given the charge

of the Kailasahar sub-division. The service of the Medical Officer of Comillah, Dr. Stork, was also transferred to the Raja (both Nilmani Das and Dr. Stork came to Agartala only in 1873).

The judiciary, Power informed in a separate note [13] (and as such, not mentioned in this Report), was a feeble imitation of the British system. There were two Courts of Original Jurisdiction, - one, Civil, and the other, Criminal. On the top of them was one Appeallate Court. A final appeal was allowed to the Raja in important matters. All the Courts were presided over by the members of the Raj family, or by the Thakurs. There were no Civil or Criminal code; the Courts were supposed to decide cases according to "equity and good conscience". In the hills rough and ready justice" was administered by the headmen or elders of the village.

The Raja's army was most ill-organised. It consisted of about 250 men. Four Court-favourites were in command : two with the designation of Captain, and two with that of Subadar. They knew little or nothing of drill and had no experience of active service. Each had the power to recruit anybody he liked. The pay of a sepoy was only Rs. 4 a month, and as it was not possible for a sepoy to live on his pay, he was allowed to return to his field for cultivaiton after a short course of slovenly drill. None of the sepoys was fit for any active duty. There was, however, a company (bradurie) of Gorkhas, who were the only men fit for action. Their pay was Rs. 6 a month, with battas when on active service. But the Gorkhas, observed Power, were fast leaving the Raja's service for two reasons : one, they found that only the favourites of the Raja, or who had influence in the Durbar, got promoted; and secondly, they were attracted by the higher pay given to the Arakan police force.

The Raja's police consisted of about 200 men. There were four Darogahs, 37 jemadars and other officers, and 173 burkandazes. The number of thanas were eight. The force, according to Power, lacked inducement, as "There was no pressing for conviction, and no blame is attached to an investigating officer for failing to obtain sufficient evidence when such was not ready to hand." In any case, no charges of torture to extort confessions were made against them.

The jail at Agartala was a mere shanty, with a mat tattee round it. There was no discipline; and sometimes the prisoners were allowed to go home for a few days, on a simple promise of return.

The Revenue of the State was about Rs. 1,45,000, of which Rs. 24,849-2-6 were derived from ghats (toll stations for forest produce), Rs. 45,662 from the duty on cotton exportation, and the greater part of the remainder from a Family Tax on hill people. The method of the collection of Family Tax, the rate of which varied from tribe to tribe, gave every opportunity for exactions even to the lowest official concerned. Thus, Power observed :

Not only does the collector exact his douceur, and have himself and his followers conveyed free of expense from village to village, but the whole party have to be fed, and a percentage is levied by the peons (Binindias). I have been assured that fees paid under one pretext or another amount frequently to 50 per-cent over and above the amount of the tax as originally settled.

Power divided the population of the State into two broad categories, - the inhabitants of the plains, consisting of the Bengalis and Manipuris, and the people of the hills. The latter consisted of six major tribes : Rajbansi Tipperahs, Jamatiyas, Noatiyas, Riangs, Hallams and Kukis. The total number of population was about 35,000, of whom the hill tribes numbered about 20,000, and the people of the plains 14,500. All the hill tribes lived in the same manner, and were joom cultivators. The Tipperahs, however, observed Power, were

gradually being assimilated to the inhabitants of the plains, especially by adopting a modified caste-system. In general, the hill people were "very simple, truthful, and honest till corrupted by the evil influence arising from closer intercourses with the inhabitants of the plains."

The people were virtually without any education. While the hill people were totally illiterate, the people of the plains were only marginally better. There were only two schools in the Raja's territory, one at Agartala, known as the Anglo-Vernacular School, or the Maharajas School, and the other at Kailasahar, which was opened only in 1872.

Agartala itself was only a village. There were no roads, and it was cut off from the outside world for want of roads. A Municipality was instituted at Agartala, in 1871, under the chairmanship of Political Agent. The Raja sanctioned a grant of Rs. 3,100 in 1872.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1873-74

Prepared by : Capt. E. G. Lillingston, the Political Agent.
Submitted on : July 15, 1874.

The Report included a portion of A. W. B. Power's account of his travel into the interior of Tripura (Pars. 8-9, sub-Pars. 1-9).

This second Report of the Agency is full of important informations. First, the eastern boundary of the State was fixed. In the words Capt. Lillingston :

"The Lungai River between the Haichik and Jampoi ranges to its source in the Betlieng-Sile Peak, then across to the Dolajuree Peak, and then by the recognised southern boundary to the Fenny River, has been fixed upon as the boundary".

(the Raja was, however, not happy with this unilateral fixation of the boundary).

Secondly, a series of reforms took place in matters of justice. The following enactments were passed in 1873-74 :

No.	I	Criminal Procedure Code.
	II	Police Code.
of 1283 T.E. (1873 A. D.)	III	Abkari Act.
	IV	Cattle Trespass Act.
	V	Regulating the manner in which drafts of Acts, & c., are to be made.
No.	I	Limitation Act.
	II	Cvil Procedure Code.
	III	An Act regulating the manner in which decisions, & c., are to be written.
	IV	Municipal Act.

These were the first written laws of the State. A Penal Code was also under consideration, and though these might not, in the words of Capt. Lillingston, be brilliant specimen of legislation, but they have the advantage of simplicity, and can be easily understood by those concerned.

Thirdly, a hospital was opened at Agartala, in May 1873. It was entirely supported by the Raja, while Dr. Stork gave his services free.

Fourthly, the activities of the Agartala Municipality began, and for purposes of municipal administration, the Agartala town was divided into eight wards, and a chowkidar appointed to each.

Finally, Capt. Lillingston gave a fairly good account of the past history of Tripura. Interestingly, he never had a glimpse of the Rajmala, the Court-history of Tripura, which, in his words, was "a sealed volume," nor did he read the Rev. James Long's version of the Rajamala, though it was published by that time. He collected materials from other sources, notably, the 4th volume of Rohasya Sundraleha, No. 46.

Capt. Lillingston also informs us that a budget system has lately been intorduced. This was, however, not correct as the later Reports would show.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1874-75

Prepared by : Capt. W. L. Samuells, the Political Agent.
Submitted on : July 9, 1875.

This Report was actually prepared by Capt. Lillingston, before his departure from Agartala. Capt. Samuells merely added a statistical supplement to it.

In this Report, for the first time, we find a veiled criticism of Birchandrs. On the one hand, Capt. Lillingston admitted of a perfect understanding between the Raja and the Agent, while, on the other hand, he remarked:

"I found it very difficult to get him to take real active interest in the affairs of his State; he is very apathetic and averse to any change, ... He hardly ever leaves his palace, and spends most of the time in photography, oil-painting, & c., taking up this and that as an amusement for a time, and then throwing it aside as a child does a toy he has tired of ..."

The Report also criticised the way in which the eldest son of the Raja, the young Jubaraj, was being brought up. Like his father, the Jubaraj, Radhakishore, also hardly left the palace. He was never out of Agartala and. as a result, the Agent apprehended, his outlook about the outer world must be very limited. Much cannot be expected, reported Capt. Lillingston, from such an heir to the crown of Hill Tipperah.

The statistical supplements, added by Capt. Samuells, to the Report, provide us with vital informations on the population and revenue of the state. A special agency was set up to undertake the task of some sort of census. Though the project was not very successful, it was found out that the total number of population in the State was 74,242, or in round numbers, 75,000 (and not 35,000, as estimated by Power), of which the number of hill people was about 41,892, and the people of the plains about 32,413.

The total revenue during the year, in round figures, was Rs. 1,86,932, which was an increase of Rs. 25,000, as compared to the revenue of 1873-74. The major sources of revenue were land revenue from the plains, Family tax from the hills, forest produce, cotton and til, and royalty on elephants.

The most important source of revenue was, however, the forest produce, which was managed, as in other cases, on the farming system. There were 28 farmers of forest produce, and the maximum revenue paid by any man was Rs. 5,757, and the minimum Rs. 10-10.

The cotton and till were entirely grown on the hills by jooming, and were sold by the hill people to the exporters. The Cotton mehal was farmed out to two persons. One of them paid to the State Rs. 46,350, and the other Rs. 830-10. The exporters had to pay the farmers of the mehal Rs. 1-2 to 1-14, according to the quality of cotton. The Agency collected the information that about 36,000 maunds of cotton and 12,000 maunds of til were exported during the year.

The ijaras for the purpose of elephant-catching (known as the khedda) were given to four persons, who paid the State a share of the value of elephants captured. The shares varied from 2 annas to 7 annas.

There were, apart from the major sources of revenue, a number of petty taxes, such as, taxes on the export of parrots, of gurjun oil, and on the sale of spinning-wheel, etc. The revenue derived from these sources was very small, yet these, in the words of Capt. Samuells, "are only worth mentioning by way of illustrating the exrtaordinary fertility of resources which the financier of a Native State possessed in matters of taxation."

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1875-76

Prepared by : T. E. Coxhead, the Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 26, 1876.

The Report provides further information on reforms. First, a Post Office was opened at Agartala, in October 1877. The Political Agent was made the ex-officio Post Master. It was entirely supported by the Raja, with a monthly grant of Rs. 60. It worked under the supervision of the Post Master-General of Bengal.

Second, there was an increase in the number of schools. During the yer, two pathsalas (elementary schools) were established, - one at Agartala, and the other at Amlighata. The pathsala at Agartala was opened by the Jubaraj, within the premises of the Rajbari (palace), almost exclusively for the children of the Thakurs, and of the officials of the State. The Raja also incresased his grant to the Agartala School, to Rs. 1,350, and to the Kailasahar School, to Rs. 180 a year.

Third, the judiciary underwent several changes. The number of Original Criminal Court was increased to four. Two other Courts were also established at the mufussil towns of Kailasahar and Udaypur. Usually, the Courts were presided over by the Thakurs, but the mufussil Courts were presided over by the respective sub-divisional officers.

Among other interesting informations we find that the Jubaraj Radhakishore Deb had established a 'Literary and Debating Society'. The President of the Society was the Jubaraj himself, while members included his brothers, a few Thakurs, and other gentlemen. The Society met once a week, when original essays were read and discussed (It reminds us of a similar society established by the Derozians of Bengal early in the 19th century). The Jubaraj, moreover, had undertaken the comilation of a Tipperah vocabulary.

The revenue of the year was Rs. 2,31,470. There was, thus, an increase of Rs. 23,000 over the last year. About 34,162 maunds of cotton were exported during the year, and even then a very large quantity was reported to have been remained undisposed of in the hills. Otherwise, there would have been a further increase in revenue.

There were 19 markets in the State, of which five were in the interior, - at Udaypur, Bisalgarh, Devi Bazar, Farnah Dharmanagar, and Kamalpur, Four periodical fairs were also held in the State every year.

Coxhead also gave us some information about the nobility of the State. The nobles of Tripura were called

Thakurs. They included not only the sons of the reigning Raja, but also those, whose descent from some former Rajas were admitted. They also included some others of reputed Kshatria origin, who were held to be descendants of those who had accompanied the founder of the existing dynasty of Tripura. All the Thakurs were entitled to a small monthly grant from the Raja. Extra-grants were also provided on special occasions, such as, marriages etc. Coxhead, however, had a very low opinion about the Thakur community, whom he described as the dead-weight influence and obstacle to reform.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1876-77

Prepared by : C. W. Bolton, the Political Agent.
Submitted on : July 17, 1877

The actual report had been prepared by Coxhead before he left Agartala. Bolton made only some minor alterations, and added a statistical supplement.

In the main, the Report was a critique of Birchandra's administration, except in the field of education. The revenue of the year was less than the previous year; it was only Rs. 1,82,632, against Rs. 2,13,473 of 1875-76. The decrease, according to the Report was partly due to the dismissal of the Dewan, Nilmani Das, who was a very competent officer, particularly in the collection of revenue. It was also reported that the Raja has not yet adopted the budget system, and that in spite of objections, the petty taxes on parrots, gurjun oil, spinning-wheel, sarshu (mustard-seed), chona-sikar, belatihaldi, etc. were not abolished. In the opinion of the Agent, these taxes were maintained solely for the advantage of farmers ... who, by nominal payments to the State, obtain privileges greatly to the inconvenience, of the people.

It was further reported that the Raja's army was paid in a most irregular manner, and that at the outlaying stations, men were five, six and eight months in arrear. The Agartala Municipality had also turned out a complete failure; the meeting of the Municipal Committee was hardly held, roads were neglected, and expenditures uncontrolled.

The only progress was in education. The Raja ordered a new school to be established at Udaypur. A new school was also opened at the Manipuri settlement in Agartala. At the Chirstian village at Mariamnagar, the first ever girls pathsala was opened. A muktab for the instruction in Persian was also established at Agartala. It was, however, maintained at the expense of the Raja's family-tutor, Radha Raman Ghosh (a graduate of the Calcuttal University), who had been entrusted with the supervision of the Education Department of the State.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1877-78

Prepared by : C. W. Bolton, the Political Agent.
Submitted on : July 29, 1878

This was the last Report of the Political Agent (as there was no separate Political Agent henceforth). The main feature of the Report is a further indictment of Birchandra as a ruler, and an admission of the helplessness of the Political Agent (who was not given any power to directly interfere in the internal administration) when the Raja refused to follow his advice. The Report also deals, in some detail, with the condition of the people, and for the first time, with weather and corps.

The year, however, witnessed some important events. One was the bestowal on Birchandra of the title of

Maharaja, as a personal distinction, in recognition of his loyalty and endeavour to improve the administration of the State. Though the title was conferred on October 24, 1877, the actual ceremony of investiture took place late in 1878.

The other important event was the end of the Domestic Slavery in Tripura, which was prevalent in the State from time immemorial. The Maharaja issued a Proclamation forbidding, under penalties, the sale, purchase, receiving in pledge, or forcible detention of any human being as a slave.

There was also a further advance in primary education. At the close of the year, there were as many as 18 schools, with a student population of 430. The number of girls' school now rose to 4, of which three were opened during the year. The number of girl-student was 53, of which all except 5 were Manipuries.

The revenue increased slightly; it was Rs. 1,99,549, against Rs. 1,82,532 of the previous year. But there was hardly any effort, on the part of the administration, to increase the revenue, or open up new sources of income. It was reported that indigenous tea-bushes were discovered covering a wide area of the State on the northern, western and southern borders, and that the tea-planters of Sylhet were interested to develop the gardens in the State. But the Maharaja was not enthusiastic about European planters in the State, while he himslef would not develop them.

Criticising the Maharajas attitude, Bolton reported :

"The Maharaja appears never to have devoted as much attention to his affairs, whether in connection with the administration or with the management of his landed estate, as might have been expected from a man of his ability, education and physical vigour. Of late he has shown still less inclination than formerly to attend to business, and I fear that this feeling will grow upon him ... he appears to have given up his time mainly to amusements, much of which has involved expenditure which the State cannot afford."

All the suggestions of the Agents regarding reduction of expenditure in administration, which was unnecessary large, and the personal expenditure of the Maharaja, went in vain. The Maharaja's debt, by that time, had already exceeded 5 lakhs of rupees.

An embittered Bolton reported that it was actually impossible for the Political Agent to improve the administratrion so long as the Agent's interference would be restricted to advice, and that it is quite useless to press the Maharaja to adopt the budget system, in as much as he is not likely to control his expenditure according to the allotments of a budget.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1878-79

Prepared By _ Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 26, 1879
Ex-officio Political Agent : F. Jones.

This was the first Report of the Assistant Political Agent, U. K. Das, who took up duties on October 28, 1878. In his forwarding note, the Ex-officio Political Agent did not alter or add anything worth noting.

Apart from important events of the year, Das's first Report provides us, for the first time, with information on public health, materiel condition of the people, trade and commerce, labour, and the state of the public

feeling.

The most important event of the year was the investiture ceremony of Birchandra, with the title and khillut of the 'Maharaja', which took place on November 28, 1878. The Commissioner of Dacca attended the ceremony as the representative of the British Government.

Secondly, the Maharaja nominated his fourth son, Samarendra Chandra, as the 'Bara Thakur', or the heir to the throne next to the Jubaraj.

Thirdly, an important social reform took place when the Maharaja abolished the "Jolye system". It was an ancient custom, under which the Maharaja's wives and sons were allowed to make "Jolyes", or servants from among the hill people.

There was also a real advance in school education. The number of schools increased from 18 to 25, and that of students from 430 to 700. But according to the Report, the condition of the principal school of the State, the Agartala School, was not at all satisfactory, as none was interested in its improvement.

The revenue administration remained equally unsatisfactory. There was a decreas of revenue during the year; it was Rs. 1,95,134 against Rs. 1,99,549 of the previous year. The Maharaja, however, abolished some more petty taxes, on the advice of the Agency.

It was reported that the entire trade and commerce of the State were in the hands of the Bengalis of the neighbouring British districts. Labour, it was also reported, was always scarce in the State, and as such, both skilled and unskilled labourers were imported from the neighbouring British districts, at comparatively higher wages.

The peasants of the plains of Tripura were reported to be free from the curse of indebtedness; but the hill people, almost as a rule, were always indebted to the Bengali money-lenders. The injurious practice of taking advance from money-lenders also prevailed, to a great extent, among the people of the hills. Their general condition was really pathetic. They were, in the words of Das, "improvident, idle, and addicted to drinking." They knew virtually no skilled labour, while they wuold never come to the plains to work as day-labourers, even when they were on the verge of starvation. The only article from which they could earn was cotton, but whenever there was any failure of cotton production, they could not pay their Family tax, and contracted debts, from which they could not free themselves easily.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1879-80

Prepared By : Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : July 10, 1880.
Ex-officio Political Agent : F. Jones.

The Report contains, among other things, a good deal of information about the Kukis of the State, the manufactures of the hill people, the principal articles of export and import, and the pay structure of the chief officers of the State.

The number of the Kukis in the State was about 3,000. They lived in the Kailasahar region, under 7 Chiefs, each of whom having about 300 to 500 persons under him. There were, in all, 16 branches of Kukis, but only 8 could be seen in the State. They were :

1. Amrae. 2. Pyetoo. 3. Chotlang.
4. Khareng. 5. Chanlew. 6. Balte.
7. Byefae. 8. Biate.

The Kukis always called their Chiefs, 'Rajas'. The Maharaja had now adopted a policy of formally conferring on them titular distinctions. Thus, about five years ago, one Thoma Raja, was made a 'Jung Bahadur', and during the year, a Chief, named Lalja Chya, had been made a 'Raja'.

Regarding the manufactures of the hill people, the Assistant political Agent reported that, they prepared only a few articles of clothing, exclusively for their own use. These were :

1. Poery : It was some sort of thick soft carpet of untwisted and unspun cotton, used by the Kuki Chiefs, for purposes of bedding. It was manufactured only by the Kukis.

2. Parcha : It was a kind of thick broad sheet, sometimes coloured, used by the men folk for covering the body.

3. Rekna : It was a strong thick and usually black piece of cloth, two cubits long and a cubit and a quarter broad, worn by all hill women.

4. Rea : It was a strong piece of different colours, two cubits long and a half cubit broad, used by young hill women as breast cloths.

Apart from these articles of cloth, the hill people, in the words of Das, "know no art, not even the ordinary work in iron". For all other articles, like the earthen pots, brass utensils, silver and brass ornaments, and other, the depended on the Bengalis.

The principal articles of export, it seemed were all hill products, either of forest or joom. These were :

cotton, til, and forest produce of various kinds, such as, bamboos, timber, thatching grass, konda-boats, and occasionally, Poeries.

The chief articles of import were : salt, earthen pots, chillies, tobacoo, molasses, sugar, cloths, and fancy things.

The total value of trade, both export and import, could not accurately be ascertained, as proper records were not kept. But, on the whole, it must be considerable. There was, however, no tax on importation.

The chief officers of the State and their pay, as shown in the Report, were the following :

Designation	Nationality	Pay (Rs.)
1. Minister	Tipperah Thakur	*
2. Judge of Agartala	Ditto	*
3. Magistrate of ditto	Ditto	*
4. Munsif of Ditto	Ditto	*
5. Sub-divisional officer of Sonamura	Ditto	*
6. Minister Associate	Bengali Brahmin	350

Designation	Nationality	Pay (Rs.)
7. Dewan of Toshakhana	Bengali Kait	250
8. Maharaja's Private Secretary	Ditto	200
9. Naib Dewan	Ditto	175
10. Manager of the Press	Ditto	100
11. Superintendent of Stamps	Ditto	75
12. Sub-divisional officer of Kailasahar	Bengali Vaidya	200
13. Asst. Sub-divisional officer, Sonamura	Bengali Brahmin	75
14. Superintendent of Wood trade	Bengali Kait	60

* No fixed pay, but supported by the Maharaja.

The report also recorded some changes in the revenue administration. The revenue collection, during the year, amounted to Rs. 2,01,106, which was an increase of Rs. 5,972 over the last year. But the total expenditure of the State, according to the estimate of the Agency, was, on the average, more than 3 lakhs of rupees (including the personal expenses of the Maharaja). Thus, the deficit stood over a lakh of rupees every year. It was against this background, and partly on the advice of the Agent, that the Maharaja abolished the farming system in cotton, when the five-year-term of the last ijara of the Cotton mehal, called the Kapash mehal, expired in 1879. The Mehal was now brought under 'khas' management, but, in spite of the objections of the Agent, the rates of taxes on cotton and til were immediately raised.

The judiciary also underwent a change. There was a special Court at Agartala, known as the Hill Court, or 'Pahari Adalat', for the disposal of cases among the hill people only. This court was abolished during the year, as the Magistrate and the Munsif of Agartala, being both of them Thakurs, were quite capable to hear and settle all disputes of the hill people.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1880-81

Prepared by : Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 25, 1881.
Ex-officio Political Agent : G. Toynbee.

The Report provides information on the first ever census of Tripura. The total number of population was ascertained to be 95,637, of whom 51,458 were males, and 44,178 females.

The Report also refers to one important social movement, known as the 'Jalchar Movement', or Caste Movement. According to Das, some influential Thakurs of Agartala, in collaboration with the Chief Minister, started, with the knowledge and permission of the Maharaja, a movement for raising their social position among the Hindus, as Kshatriyas. This, however, gave rise to some discontent among the orthodox Hindu subjects in the adjacent parts of the Maharaja's zemindaries; but there was no agitation among the resident population of the State.

The revenue collected during the year was Rs. 2,32,677, against Rs. 2,01,106 of the previous year. The increase was reported to be due to the increased rate of tax on cotton, on the one hand, and an abundance of cotton production, on the other. In a bid to find new sources of income, an attempt was made during the year

to discover mines in the State. It was believed that coal mines existed in several parts of the State. But the attempt did not yield any result because of the "ill conduct of the persons employed to supervise the business."

There was no further progress in the field of education. Though eleven new pathsalas were opened during the year, seven of the old ceased to exist. The total number of schools at the end of the year stood at 31, with a total student strength of 647. The number of the girl-students was 74, while that of the boys 573.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1881-82

Prepared by : Uma kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : July 7, 1882.
Ex-officio Political Agent : G. Tyonbee.

In this report, we find some comments of the Ex-officio Political Agent, G. Toynbee, inserted in the margin of the actual text.

The Report gives further information on the 'Jalchar Movement'. As mentioned in the previous Report, the Hindus of the Maharaja's zemindaries had opposed the movement. As a counter move, the Maharaja invited some learned pundits of Vikrampur, Dacca, and honoured them with various presents, in order to induce them to join his side. There was, thus, considerable agitation throughout the year in Agartala, and in the district of Tipperah. Das reported that the Maharaja did not force the Hindu subjects of the State to support him, and there was no instance of any oppression, and that was why no interference on the part of the Agency was called for.

There was a slight increase in the collection of revenue ; it was Rs. 2,37,789 against Rs. 2,32,677 of the previous year. Das reported that further increase of revenue could have been achieved had there been a slight reduction in the rate of tax on cotton. Large quantities of cotton remained undisposed of almost at every toll station because of the high rates of taxes.

For all the ills of the State, Das blamed the nature of administration. All powers were concentrated in the hands of the Maharaja, but he was "yearly growing less active and less mindful of his duties.' As the Chief Minister was one of his relations, he could not get work done by him regularly. There were other good officers and advisers in his service ; but none had any actual power. Under the circumstances, Das suggested that "there should be at the head of the Maharaja's service a conscientious and able officer, who should be vested with full powers", though it was unlikely that the Maharaja would willingly give real authority to anybody.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1882-83

Prepared by : Uma kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 20, 1882.
Ex-officio POlitical Agent : J. A. Hopkins.

Among the important events mentioned in the Report, the first was the visit of the Maharaja to Brindavan, after the death of his first wife. During his absence, the administration was carried on by a Council of Regency, with the Jubaraj as its President, and some of the chief officials and Thakurs as members. This arrangement was made in consultation with the Agency.

Secondly, the 'Jalchar Movement' finally came to an end, when, on the advice of the agent, the Maharaja decided not to spend more money on the movement. Das reported that the Maharaja had become a great loser

by it, both in money and name.

Thirdly, the Maharaja won the case against Kumar Nabadwip Chandra, who had challenged his accession to the throne. While giving its verdict, the High Court made it clear that the Maharaja of Tripura had an independent status.

Fourthly, coal was discovered in the Kailasahar region, and was reported to be of good quality. Due to financial stringency, no arrangement was, however, made to work the mines. It was hoped that once the proposed railway between Chittagong and Cachar were opened, the coal deposits of the State would be of great value.

The Report also refers to some improvement in road communication. A portion of Agartala to Kasba road, which was within the territory of the State, and about three miles in length, was completed during the year. The road between old Agartala and new, about four miles long, and also a few other roads, were repaired and raised. There were, however, still no roads in the interior of the State.

The revenue administration was also reported to be as unsatisfactory as before. The total collection was Rs. 2,29,961 against Rs. 2,37,789 of the previous year. The decrease was partly due to the failure of cotton production, which was only about half of the average of ordinary years.

The Post Office at Agartala had, in the mean time, become a paying office. Consequently, the Maharaja was relieved of the burden of the monthly grant, which he used to pay for its maintenance. But, reported Das, the Maharaja refused to open any other Post Office in the State.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1883-84

Prepared by : Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 23, 1884.
Ex-officio Political Agent : H. G. Cooke.

It is interesting to note that Cooke, in his brief forwarding note, reported that his predecessor, Hopkins, had verbally informed him that the whole administration of the State was in a very bad shape, and that, the works of the Assistant Political Agent, Das, were not satisfactory. Cooke was so much influenced by the briefing of Hopkins that he himself made some adverse remarks against Das. This was, indeed, the only indictment against Das during his long tenure as the Assistant Political Agent ; all the other Ex-officio Political Agents had always regarded him as a very competent officer.

However, coming to the actual Report, as prepared by Das, we find serious complaints against the administration. It was reported that having failed in their objectives to raise the status of the Maharaja and the Thakurs, through the 'Jalchar Movement', the advisers of the Maharaja, with the latter's consent, had started dismissing all those officers who were against it. As a result, a number of good, old and faithful officers had to leave the service, creating a void in the administration.

Partly to remedy this situation, the Maharaja had formed an Executive Council. It would look into matters relating both to the administration and the zemindaries. It consisted of seven members, who were to meet twice a week. In case of any dispute among members, the mater would be referred to the Maharaja for final decision.

The financial condition continued to be unsatisfactory. Though there was a slight increase in the total

collection, - Rs. 2,33,831 against Rs. 2,29,961 of the previous year, - the deficit as well as the Maharaja's debt continued unabated. Consequently, all the officials, pensioners, and suppliers of provisions remained in arrears. The request of the Agent for a budget system, to check the financial abuses, reported Das, was again turned down by the Maharaja's office.

It was also reported that owing to the financial difficulties, the number of schools decreased. There were only 15 schools now, with 425 students. Except the schools at Agartala, Kailasahar, and Sonamura, all others were actually pathsalas, and as such, these were most irregularly supported and indifferently looked after.

In spite of all this, Das found the marks of a gradual improvement of the material condition of the people in general. This he attributed partly to the consecutive good harvests for the last few years, and partly to the absence of Lushai raids for many years.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1884-85

Prepared by : Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 26, 1885.
Ex-officio Political Agent : F. H. B. Skrine.

Unlike Cooke, F. H. B. Skrine, in his forwarding note, expressed his full confidence in the ability of Das. He also declared that Das's Report contained views very similar to his own, and as such, he had very little to add. Skrine, however, sent a personal letter to the Maharaja, suggesting ways to improve the financial condition of the State. This letter was annexed at the end of the Report of Das.

The whole emphasis of this Report was on the unsatisfactory condition of finance of the State. The total collection of revenue was Rs. 2,38,724 against Rs. 2,33,831 of the last year. But the total amount of debt was estimated to be over Rs. 11,00,000. Nearly half of it covered arrears of salaries and allowances due to the officials, pensioners, and others, including shopkeepers. For this portion, no interest was paid. But on the remaining half, the State had to pay interest, on an average, about Rs. 80,000 a year, at the rate of 12% per annum.

The Maharaja's office, as usual, continued submitting to the Agency only statements of receipts, but no account of expenditure. The beneficial results, likely to follow, from the adoption of a budget system, had been repeatedly explained to the Maharaja. But, reported Das, "the proposal of a return of expenditure being supplied to the Agency is not looked upon by the Durbar with favour."

The School education also showed no further progress. Das reported that during his cold-weather tour, he had visited nearly all the schools in the interior, and found all of them languishing for want of proper support and care. (Interestingly, in this connection, Das referred to a small elementary school in a Kuki village; it is really surprising, because all the reports say that there was not a single school for the hill people, or on the hill.)

The material condition of the people was, however, improving. Even the condition of the hill people showed signs of betterment, which was evident from their purchasing pattern. Good quantities of articles, like cloths, brass pots, umbrellas, and other fancy things, which were seldom bought by the hill people previously, were now increasingly being purchased on the hills.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1885-86

Prepared by : Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 28, 1886.
Ex-officio Political Agent : S. S. Jones.

The only important event mentioned in this Report was the appointment of Deno Nath Sen, the Assistant Inspector of Schools, Dacca Division, as a Minister with wide powers both over the administration and the zemindaries. The Maharaja was actually persuaded to take this step by D. R. Lyall, the Commissioner of Dacca, who had met him at Agartala, in September 1885, and impressed on him of the necessity of appointing a qualified man from outside. Sen joined on April 6, 1886, on Rs. 800 a month.

Meanwhile, things went on as before. The total revenue for the year was Rs. 2,43,824 against Rs. 2,38,724 of the last year. There was a partial failure of cotton and rice production during the year. But, in general, people were not affected. Das observed that land revenue of the State could have been augmented several times, by a speedy reclamation of waste-lands. But, even the lower orders of the people of the neighbouring districts were not much interested to come and settle in the Maharaja's territory, because of lack of any facilities, like the tuccavi allowance, medical aid, provision for the supply of good drinking war, etc. The system of land revenue prevalent in the State also acted as a deterrent in matters of migration. The raiyats had no occupancy rights in the State, and permanent settlement with the actual cultivators was almost unknown.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1886-87

Prepared by : Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : July 7, 1887.
Ex-officio Political Agent : J. C. Price.

Price, in his forwarding not to the Report prepared by Das, castigated the Maharaja and his administration. In his opinion, much of the ill, from which the State had been suffering, was due to the evil influence of the advisers of the Maharaja. He particularly, referred to the "baneful influence" of the Maharaja's Private Secretary, Radha Raman Ghosh. The Maharaja was so much under their spell that, Price even went to the extent of describing him as "a slave of his favourites."

One reason behind such castigation, was the resignation of Deno Nath Sen, who joined only last year as a Minister with full powers. He resigned within six months, apparently on the ground that he was not permitted to draw separate travelling allowances. But according to Price, the real reason was the pressure of the advisers of the Maharaja, who were not willing to give power to any outsider.

Das was, however, always moderate in his views, and in his Report, we do not find any such scathing remarks. In fact, the whole attention in this Report was focused on land and the people of the State, along with other informations.

Thus, it is found that the total area of the State was about 4,086 square miles, and not 3,870 square miles, as reported earlier. About three-fifths of the total area, or over 2,400 square miles, were covered with hills and marshes, and unfit for cultivation. Of the remaining 1,600 square miles, only 100 square miles were supposed to be under actual cultivation. The remaining 1,500 square miles were lying waste. The rates of rent paid by

the cultivating varied from anna two to one rupee and anna eight per kani (about one-third of an acre).

There were altogether about 19,127 families (each family having 5 members on an average) living in the State. From each of these families, an average annual income of Rs. 8-5 was obtained by the State.

The hill people, who numbered about 50,000, lived on low hills in the interior and carried on their cultivation under the jooming system. They were exceedingly conservative and averse to any change. They were also "extremely lazy" and did not care to improve their position. Das observed that :

Primitive in their mode of living, they know but few wants, and those few they can get supplied with only a little exertion. They are happy, innocent and simple - traits which are due to their general ignorance.

The people of the plains, - the Hindus, Muslims and the Manipuris, - were economically better than the hill people. They were also agriculturists, having plenty of lands to cultivate, and growing paddy in large quantities. They also had few wants in life, and had no aspirations of any kind. They were peaceful and submissive to the Maharaja, whom they "love and respect".

But, Das observed that, "the great middle class, who in every country form the most important part of the population, are entirely unknown in the Maharaja's dominions." Consequently, the people were neither able nor had any opportunity to express any opinion in any matter. They were also not aware of the importance of education, and not much interested in sending their children to schools. The only exception was the Manipuri community, who showed a desire for putting their children in schools, and many of their villages had pathsalas, maintained at their own expense.

Das also observed that crime was virtually nil among the hill people, and also among the Manipuris. The criminals actually belonged to the Bengali population. But, as the number of the Bengali population was not that large (38,843 only), crime was really small in the Maharaja's territory.

Among other information, we find, a considerable increase in the collection of revenue. It was Rs. 2,89,910 against Rs. 2,43,884 of the previous year. All the principal sources of revenue, except land revenue in the plains, yielded large increase, which together amounted to Rs. 49,096. For the extension of cultivation and to induce the peasants of the neighbouring districts to come and settle in the State, the Maharaja passed a Tenancy Act, under which the British subjects were given the occupancy rights in lands.

One interesting information was that the weekly holiday of the State was changed from Sunday to Wednesday, as that was the Maharaja's birth-day.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1887-88

Prepared by : Uma kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 20, 1886.
Ex-officio Political Agent : J. C. Price.

This Report was rather shorter, as per directive of the Government. But curiously, the forwarding note of Price, was almost as long as the original Report. This was, in fact, the most damaging note against Brichandra, ever written by any Agent, in which Price had actually suggested the removal of Birchandra of all authority and power.

The main contention of Price, which he had tried to prove with facts and figures, was that in spite of all his expenditure, the Maharaja could have saved, at least, one lakh of rupees a year, on an average. Thus, during his 26 years of rule, he should have a minimum of 30 lakhs of rupees in the treasury. But, "acting under the advice of his Bengali counsellors, he owes his food and clothing ; and his borrowed debt continue unliquidated." The "unwisdom and incapacity of the present ruler, and the dishonesty and the rapacity of his present advisers", had made it essential to effect some drastic changes in the administration of the State. Price was actually in favour of appointing an Administrator for the State. But before taking such a drastic step, he suggested the appointment of the Jubaraj as the Regent, with all powers, and with suitable pension for the Maharaja.

The Report of Das, however, is devoid of any such comments. As the Report was a brief one, there was no information on anything, in detail. It was, however, reported that there was a further increase of revenue. The collection, during the year, was Rs. 3,37,352 against Rs. 2,89,910 of the previous year. The increase was mainly due to the favourable yield of cotton and til, and partly due to the extension of plough cultivation by some hill people. Das, in particular, referred to the Jamatiyas, who had begun plough cultivation. In order to encourage them and other hill people, the State Administration made arrangements to provide them and other hill people, with cattle and other necessary implements.

The Report also, for the first time, referred to the prevalence of Sati in Tripura. Das reported that, during his visit in the Sonamura division, he heard cases of Sati, which had taken place in February 1888. On enquiry, he found that the other cases had occurred before. He immediately brought the matter to the attention of the Maharaja, and advised him to issue a proclamation prohibiting the practice.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1888-89

Prepared by : Uma kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 24, 1889.
Ex-officio Political Agent : A. H. Collins.

The report, though brief, is very important.

For the first time, the Maharaja submitted a rough estimate, showing in lump, the probable receipt and expenditure, including his personal and household expenses. A look into it would show that the personal and household expenditure of the Maharaja far exceeded the amount he spent for the State.

Probable receipt for 1888-89		Probable expenditure for 1888-89	
1. From Hill Tipperah	Rs. 3,04,147	1. Administration and management charges for Hill Tipperah and zemindaries managed from Agartala	Rs. 1,54,920
2. From zemindaries managed from Agartala including a sum of Rs. 23,089 received from the Ckakla in Comillah	Rs. 1,50,060	2. Personal and household expenses of His Highness the Maharaja, including the estimate of Rs. 30,000 for repairing an old building	Rs. 2,87,622
Total	Rs. 4,54,207	Total	Rs. 4,42,542
Deduct	Rs. 4,42,542		
Balance	Rs. 11,665		

As we have already told, the amount, which the Maharaja spent for his personal and household affairs, had been withheld so long. This is for the time that the Agency as well as the British government came to know of it.

Among other important information of the Report, we find that the Maharaja had prohibited the practice of the Sati in Tripura.

A Council was also formed for conducting the administration, when Mohini Mohan Bardhan, who had succeeded Deno Nath Sen, as a Minister, resigned in November 1888. The Council consisted of four members, three of whom were officials of the State, and one, a relation of the Maharaja. Each of the members was given charge of one or more departments. The overall control, supervision and direction rested with the Maharaja himself. The Jubaraj and the Bara Thakur were to see that orders issued by the Maharaja, were duly carried out.

The revenue statement showed a decrease of Rs. 39,842. The total collection during the year was Rs. 2,97,510 against the previous year's collection of Rs. 3,37,352. The decrease was attributed mainly to the failure of revenue in cotton, which amounted to Rs. 97,372 against Rs. 1,28,188 of the previous year. The land revenue of the plains, however, began to increase gradually ; it was Rs. 52,018 against Rs. 32,266 of the last year.

THE REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1889-90

Prepared by : Uma Kanta Das, the Assistant Political Agent.
Submitted on : June 30, 1890.
Ex-officio Political Agent : R. T. Greer.

Das wrote this Report when he was no longer the Assistant Political Agent. He joined the Maharaja's service, as we have already seen, on April 15,1890. As such, he actually left a note for the Ex-officio Political Agent : "Note about the Annual Report of the Political Agency of Hill Tipperah for the year 1889-90." It was on the basis of the 'Note' that Greer prepared and later submitted his Report.

It showed that there was a slight increase in revenue collection : Rs. 3,12,465 against the previous Rs. 2,97,510. This increase was in spite of a fall in paddy production.

The Report also mentioned the production of first commercial corps in the State; jute cultivation had been commenced in some parts of the State, and found profitable.

Finally, a plan was devised to liquidate the debts of the Maharaja. The rate of interest was reduced from 12 to 6 per cent. per annum ; and arrangements were made so that the creditors would, henceforth, receive the entire amount of their interest, and a portion of the principal, from the yearly jama of the farms granted to them. Under this new system, the total interest paid by the State came down to only Rs. 36,000 a year. It was estimated that the entire amount would, thus, be liquidated in about 11 years.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Volume I was published in January 1996, by the same Research Institute of the Government of Tripura.
2. This is known form the letter of Henry Vansittart, the Governor, dated 14 July 1761, to Harry Verelst, the Chief of the Chittagong Council, in which the former directed the latter to withdraw the Company fauj, and hand the Chakla over the Nawab; Bangladesh District Records, Chittagong, Vol-1. 1760-1787, Dacca University, 1978, P. 69-70, Document No 1.16.
3. A. Mackenzie, History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North East Frontier of Bengal, (Reprinted), Delhi, 1981, P. 272
4. This is found in the letter of F. J. Halliday, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, No. 121 dated 27 December 1838, to the Commissioner of Chittagong, par. 32, Foreign Poll A. Dec 1870, Nos. 362-374.

4.1 Letter of A. Eden, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, No. 6569, dated 17 December 1869, to the Secretary, Government of India; Foreign Poll A, August 1870, Nos 254-259.

5. Letter of A. Eden. No. 2513, dated 25 May 1870, to the Secretary, Government of India; Foreign Poll A. February 1871, No. 264.
6. Two of Birchandra's remonstrations. i. e. of June 14 1870, and August 16 1870 are found in the National Archives of India, New Delhi; Foreign Poll A, February 1871, No. 264.
7. Letter of C. U. Aitchison, Secretary to the Government of India, No. 1798 P. dated 3 October 1870 to Birchandra, the Raja of Hill Tipperah; Foreign Poll A, December 1870, Nos. 362-376.
8. The duties of the Political Agent were clearly specified in the appointment letter of the First Political Agent of Tripura, A. W. B. Power; the appointment letter was issued under the signature of A. C. Bayley, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Judical Department, No. 3125, dated Fort William, the 3rd July 1871.
9. Immediately after his arrival at Agartala, Power, in a letter, No. 5, dated 5 August 1871, informed the Bengal Government that the Raja was extremely nervous that his territory might be annexed.
10. Birchandra occupied the throne, on the basis of an order of the late Raja, Isanchandra, in 1862; but his accession was challenged in the British Courts, and as such, the British Government, at that time, only recognised him as the de facto Raja. Ultimately, the Privy council gave verdict in favour of Birchandra in 1869, and the Government also recognised him as the de jure Raja since then.
11. W. W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol-VI (Reprinted), Delhi 1973, P. 462.
12. Letter of D. R. Lyall, the Commissioner of Chittagong, in connection with the Report of the Political Agency in Tripura for the yer 1888-89, No. 822 HT-IX-17, dated 1 July 1889, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal.
13. Immediately after his assumption of office as the Political Agent, Power sent a note to the Bengal Government, on the judicial system of Tripura ; for this see the unpublished thesis of D. K. Chaudhuri, "The Raj in Conflict and Counciliation (Tripura between 1871 and 1890), Rabindra Bharti University, Calcutta, 1994.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR 1878-79.

No. 1296 dated Commillah, the 31st July 1879.
From- F. Jones Esq, Magistrate of Tipperah, and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah,
To- The Commissioner of the Dacca Division.

I HAVE the honor to forward herewith the report with accompanying statements, of the Hill Tipperah Political Agency for the year 1878-79, drawn up by the Assistant Political Agent Baboo Umakanta Das, and to submit the following remarks thereon .

(1). No instructions have been received by me on the subject of the report, but I have assumed that the Assistant Political Agent was the proper person to draw it up, as he resides at Agartolah and alone possesses the necessary informaton.

(2.) Some subjects in the report appear to me to have been treated at too great length, as for instance the account of the Durbar and the false rumours amongst the hill people and I think the Assitant Political Agent would have shown greater discretion and judgement if he had omitted all mention of the question referred to in paragraph 6; but nearly every subject of importance has been touched on, and, on the whole, I think the report does him credit.

(3) It is very satisfactory to find that during the year the Maharaja has continued to take an active interest in the abolition of slavery, and that, in spite of the opposition of some of the Thakurs, he has insisted on his orders prohibiting it being really carried out.It is also satisfactory that the Maharaja has had the moral courage and the wisdom to abolish the jolye system. Both the reforms in question are believed to be chiefly due to the sound advice given to the Maharaja by the late political Agent, Mr. Bolton.

(4)In Paragraph 73, the Assistant Political Agent speaks of the willingness of the Maharaja to appoint men of superior qualifications to the higher posts in the State, and mentions that he has applied for the service of the Agency head clerk. I am glad to find that the Maharaja has gone so far as to acknowledge that the present holders of these posts do not possess superior qualifications; but I fear that, owing to his good nature or weakness it is only too probable that the reforms will effected " very gradually" indeed. The Maharaja's personal characteristics are , however, so well known to Government, through the reports of former Political Agents, that it is not necessary for me to undertake the unpleasant task of showing how effectually they stand in the way of real improvements.

(5) The proposal to establish a new sub-division at Belonia is in itself deserving of approval; but in the present state of the Maharaja's finances it appears to me of very doubtful expendiency and it is to be feared that it will serve as an excuse for the creation of a number of new appoinments.

(6)The evil system of farming out the Government revenues is still in force, and I fear is likely to remain so; but it is satisfactory to observe that the obnoxious petty taxes, referred to in paragraph 79 of the report, have been abolished by order of the Maharaja. Another petty reform was also effected during the year. This was the separation of the female from the male ward in the Agartolah Jail, which was carried out at the suggestion of the Assistant Political Agent.

(7) Great difficulty has always been found in obtaining Goorkha recruits for the Maharaja's military force probably owing to the men not being regularly paid; but renewed attempts are now being made to enlist men in the forntire districts bordering Nepal .

(8) The stockades are at too great a distance from Comillah to allow of my visiting them, but they have all been inspected by the Assistant Political Agent , who reports them to be in good order.

(9) At the close of the year under report, the Tipperah District Road Cess Committe's estimate for the road between Kushba on the Bramunberiah road and a point on the boundary of Hill Tipperah near Agartolah was sanctioned by Government, and, according to the last reports received, above a mile and half of earthwork has been completed, and materials for bridges &c., collected. The Maharaja has sanctioned estimates for the construction of a road from the point on his boundary above mentioned to Agartolah, thus compliting the communication between Agartolah and Comillah. The want of a road connecting the head-quarters of this district with the Maharaja's capital has long been felt, and its construction will prove a great boon to all persons who have to visit Agartolah for trading or other purposes.

(10)I visited Agartolah at the end of November last, and if possible I shall go there again some time next month.

Dated Agartolah , the 26th June 1879.
From — BABOO UMAKANTA DAS, Assistant Political Ageant, Hill Tipperah,
To- The Magistrate of Tipperah and Political Ageant, Hill Tipperah.

I Have the honour to submit the annual report of the general administration of the Hill Tipperah Agency for the year 1878-79.

CHIEF EVENTS OF THE YEAR.

Abolition of the appointment of a separate Political Agent.

2. Under the Supreme Government's orders contained in Assistant Secretary Mr. Durand's letter to the Governornment of Bengal, No.1523P of the 20th July 1878, the appointment of a saperate Political Agent of the rank of a fourth grade Deputy Commissioner on Rs.1,000 per mensem was abolished and that of an Assistant Political Agent of the rank of a fourth grade Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector on Rs. 500 a month for employment at Agartolah was sanctioned, the Magistrate of Tipperah being at the same time appointed *ex-office* Political Agent of Hill Tipperah, with instruction that he should visit Agartolah twice in the year and stay there for a fortnight each time. Under the arrangement made in accordance with these orders, I was appionted to this Agency in October last. Mr. C.W. Bolton the late Officiating political Agent, made over charge of the office on the 28th idem, and since that date I have been in service here.

How was it viewed by the Durbar.

3. It would not be either so well or becoming on my part to speak of the effects which, up to date , have resulted from the above-mentioned change , but I think I may be permitted to state for your notice one or two circumstances in connection with the matter. It is said that the idea of having a native officer placed at Agartolah in charge at the Agency was not at first regarded with favour by the Durbar. In whatever light the change might have at first been viewed, nothing has been heard of it since its novelty was worn out ,i,e, since about the time when the Commissioner and yourself were pleassed to visit Agartolah in November last. The new arrangement, besides other desirable effects that it has produced, has enabled the Maharaja to communicate with the Agency more frequently and more unreservedly than before . The place of his residence being at a distance of about four miles from the Agency, the Maharaja had formerly to depened upon others in the matter of his correspondence with it. But now, when urgency or importance requires it, he addresses me in Bengali writing his letters

himself, and to such communications I return my replies in Bengali as well. Whilst on this subject, I may add for your information that the Durbar had viewed with suspicion the action of Government, when in 1871 the Agency Office was established, and that therefore more than once had objected to the appointment of a British officer at Agartolah. But now it has been well understood by all, and the Maharaja has in the course of a conversation sincerely admitted before me that all the reforms that have been introduced into the administration of the State are due to the friendly advice of the Agency.

Investiture of the Raja with the title and khillut of Maharaja.

4. Among the chief events of the year , the installation of the Raja as Maharaja, and the bestowal upon him by the Commissioner of the sunnud sanctioning the superior title and the presentation by the same authority of the banner sent by the Government of the India in commemoration of the assumption by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen of the title of Empress of India, deserve prominent mention. The ceremony was allowed to take place at the Maharaja's residence where it was performed with befitting eclat. The details are well known to you. The following is a brief account.

The Commissioner's Durbar

5. The 28th day of November was fixed for the ceremony, as it had been selected by the Durbar Pundit as the most auspicious for the purpose. On that day , in the morning, the Commissioner and yourself arrived here. The arrival was announced by the firing from the lines of the State force of thirteen guns as salutes to the Commissioner. At about noon the Maharaja, attended by his principal officers visited the Commissioner and yourself. In the afternoon the Commissioner held a formal Durbar in the Rajbari in a decently decorated house that had been previously constructed for the purpose and after the presentation of the sunned, the khillut, and the banner, addressed the Maharaja, congratulating him on the kind recognition he has received from Government, and advising him as to the course he should follow in the matter of the stengthening and improving his administration. In the evening he and the Political Agent paid their return visit to the Maharaja, and early in the morning the following day they left this place, when, as on the occasion of their arrival, thirteen guns were fired from the lines.

How is the title regarded.

6. It is said that the Maharaja has been much more gratified being presented with the banner than being invested with the more exalted title, as the latter has not been a new addition to his name as known among his subjects. The title of Maharaja is said to have been enjoyed by him ever since he came in possession of the Raj, and by his ancestors for a long series of generations. Indeed when requested to put on the robes given as khillut, the Maharaja said that he would receive the articles with all gratitude and pleasure; but that in a Durbar at his own house, he could not without lowering himself in the estimation of his people,dispense with the gold *mukut of his family*. He therefore requested that he might be allowed on the occasion to use this family ornament, instead of the sheropech and turban of the khillut, a request to which the Commissioner was pleased to accede.

The appointment of Bara Thakur and his visit to Comillah.

7. The next in order of importance was the appointment by the Maharaja of his fourth son as Bara Thakur, or heir of the State next after the Jobaraj. In August last this young son of the Maharaj visited Comillah, where the late Officiating Political Agent introduced him to the several European Officials of the station. Such trips by the sons of the Maharaja are calculated to be of much good to the State. I am happy to be able to inform you that at my suggestion the Maharaja has expressed a wish to send within a sort time his first son, viz. the Jobaraj on a journey to Comillah. Visits to distant and more important places, particularly to the metropolis, would

be more desirable; but they cannot for some time to come be undertaken in consequence of the unfavourable condition of the finances of the State.

False rumour about the Lushais.

8.Another noticeable event of the year was the rumour of the rising of the Kukies of the Lushai country, which broke out by the end of January last and caused some excitement and a little mischief among a considerable section of the Maharaja's subjects in the Udaypore sub-district. The Tipperah Hills having now no communication with the people beyond the frontiers, which are definitely settled and known and there being at present among the borders a line of posts where armed men keep careful watch during the raiding season, and the general administration of the State having of late been considerably improved, the rumour, when it reached Agartolah, was justly regared as false. Without therefore being alarmed in any way, the State officers promptly took masures to give reassurance to the panic-stricken people and to ascretain the cause of the rumour. The Magistrates of Agartolah and Udaypore both went among the people for the pourpose. The palns were praiseworthy enough, but they were not so well executed, partly for want of means of communication in the interior and partly from inexperience, if not inefficiency of the officers deputed . In the course of some time, however, all fear of the people was over ,either because of the reassurance they received from the State, or because of the nothingness that followed the rumour by which they were affrighted. All this time, under your orders, I was at head -quarters advising the Maharaja in the action he took and collecting information for report to you.As, however, a considerably long time elapsed, and yet no intelligent account of the cause of the rumour was received from the State officers, I went to the interior myself with your permission, in accordance with arrangement that had originally been approved by you. I proceeded as far as the extreme limit of the inhabited region of Hill Tipperah on the south-eastern side, in which the rumor at first arose, visiting in the way serveral of the Tipperah and Riang villages, situated on the hills. From the enquiries made in these and other village lying about the source of the Goomtee the following story as to how the rumour arose and spread was gathered.

The cause of the rumour.

9. Every year during the winter considerably large parties of hillmen living on or about the banks of the higher waters of the Goomtee go to work in the forests situated in the extreme south-eastern portion of Hill Tipperah, which is watered by the streamelets konwn as the Sima and the Rima. There they remain engaged for weeks and months cutting wood and contructing dug-outs. While in the last cold season they were so employed in these forests, which have no human inhabitants of their own, one party of their number was one day in January last visited by a company of five unknown Riangs, who informed them that they (the Riangs) had come from the south, meaning, it is supposed, the Chittagong Hill Tracts; that they had been rambling about in the forests in search of elephant tusks; and that in the course of their movements, they had seen in a wilderness, about four or five day's journey distant to the east the spot where, the wood cutters were, numeous foot-prints of men, an-indication which the Cis-frontier people, from their past experiences, understand to be that of the rising of the Lushais. Saying this, the informants went about their business in quest of ivory : but the hearers got terrified. They communicated the intelligence to their fellow - brethren of other parties working in the forest, and then all in a body left the place for their respective homes. At home, too, for a time they could not remain at ease; for the remembrance of past calamities in connection with Kukie raids is yet so storng in their minds, and naturally they were so timid, that without waiting to make any enquiry, or without taking any thought, they left their villages *en masse* and hid themselves in the neighouring jungle, from which they returned only when, after the lapse of some days, they found that the rumor was only a false alarm .

10. Whether the five unkown Riangs gave a false information with an evil motive, or a true one with good wishes towards the wood-catters, cannot be said with any degree of certainty, as the Riangs themselves have not been seen again. The probability is that they gave false information for the purpose of intimidating the men, and thereby inducing them to leave the forests in which they (the Riangs) could then make their search for tusks with impunity, as all ivory in the wilds of Hill Tipperah is the property of the State , which treats as offenders the persons who, having found in them any tusk, do not surrender it to the Maharaja's men.Probably the news of the disturbance which about this time arose among certain hillmen living beyond the borders of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and which, it is said, was settled on the intervention of the authorities of that district, was known to these Riangs, who therefore were the more confident of their attempt to scare away the wood-cutters. Should they have really seen anywhere in the wilderness a sign of the gathering of Kukies , they like the Tipperah men, would have been struck with fear themselves, and like them would have gone home to take care of their family and children.

The rumour was false.

11. I have related above at some length the matter about the rumoured Kukie gathering, because the effects that it produced appear to be distressing, though in reality the people themselves did not view it as an extraordinary occurrence, or as one for which they were not prepared. Nomadic as they are, the leaving of their homes for a time was not a matter of great regret or trouble to them . Indeed, when it was known for certain that there was no reason for any fear, some of the people did not think it worth their while to return to the villages which they had deserted, the new places which they had subsequently occupied having been found as good as, or better than, the old ones, In a village which had been abandoned, but re-occupied before my visit, the men expressly told me that they were suprised that the matter of a rumour which was so usual in the cold season, and which generally proved groundless, should become the subject of so much enquiry by the authorities .

It did not cause any unusual trouble to the people.

12. Before concluding the above subject, I beg to state for your notice one or two incidents which, notwithestanding their triffling character, were powerful enough to cause considerable alarm.

Other incidenta of the kind.

13. In November last two Hallams, subjects of the Maharaja, were committed by the Deputy Superintendent of Koilashur to the Sessions Court at Agartolah for trial in a murder case. They were hand-cuffed and forwarded. The spectacle of two persons with hand-cuffs on, and with guards around them, was sufficient to strike terror among the hill people. One person said to another that a subject of the Raja's has been killed, and that two of the offenders have been caught and are being forward to the Rajbari. A third heard that two Cossacks have been caught when killing a subject of the Maharaja, and in his turn said to a fourth that Cossacks have come in to raid, and that two of them have been caught. Thus in every step the news of the two offenders being forwarded for trial to Agartolah received a particular colouring, until it become so strong and terrible that a considarable number of hill people, including Kukies, the subjects of the Maharaja, were induced to leave their villages and take shelter in hiding places.

The sight of two hand-cuffed offenders alarmed the people.

14. Soon after the above , on a market day at Kamalpur in the Koilashar sub-division, a man was seen all of a sudden to run away from the market-place, and the traders and others who had gathered on the spot immediately took to their heels, taking with them what things they could and making the place of the market a complete

A man suddenly ran away from a market; the running caused alarm.

desert. On the following trading day they told to enquirers that from the running away of the man they understood that Cossacks were coming.

15. In a previous year, at Udaypore, where the Maharaja has a military guard-post and a civil police station, and which, as the ancient capital of the State , is a place of considerable inportance, the running through a trackless field of an old woman with sundry things in her hands was sufficient to strike terror, first among the young boys who were then tending cattle there, then among the masters and relations of those boys, and finally among the villagers in general, who began to abandon their abodes with a view to take shelter in the forests. The excitement was calmed and peace restored only after the civil and the military police had made considerable efforts in that behalf.

The running through a field of a woman was the source of an alarm.

16. The above shows how insecure the people feel themselves during the winter , and how great therefore is the necessity in that time for giving them more protection, or, what they really want, more assurance of protection. In this view I have suggested to the Maharaja the advisability of deputing during the winter some responsible officers to the interior, in order that they may make personal inspection of villages and otherwise attened to the wants of the people. This suggestion, I am happy to say, has been accepted and will be acted upon from the next cold season.

Inspection by State officers necessary.

COLD WEATHER TOURS.

17. With the execption of February, during which, as said before (paragraph 8 ante), I remained at head-quarters under your orders, I was out on duty in all the months of my incumbency during the year. Thus in November, at the beginningof which I arrived at Agartolah, I was out for 16 days; in December I was out for 21 days ; in January for 11 days; and in March for 23 days—or in all during the year for 71 days. In consequence of my inability to leave head-quarters in February, it was found necessary to go out in camp in April, in which month I was out for 14 days. Thus the tours on the whole occupied a period of 85 days.

Time occupied by tours.

18. During the rounds I visited almost all the important places in the interior and in the frontiers, namely the places where military posts or civil police stations are situated, or where markets are held or tolls are collected or the khedda works are carried on, or where there are schools or dispensaries or other public institutions. I took particular care to see some of the villages of consequence occupied by the hill tribes, and also the Maharaja's zemindaries in Chagalnaya in Noakhally, where heretofore the affairs were in an unsatisfactory condition.

Place visited.

18½. In Hill Tipperah there are many places in the interior which an archaeologist or an antiquarian might visit with advantage. Some of them fell in my way during the tours and were noted in my diaries, a few short extracts from which I beg to give bellow : -

Interesting places in interior

"18th March 1879.—Continued proceeding up the river (Goomtee). At noon arrived at a place called Deota - Mura. Here there are high hills on either side rising almost perpendicularly from the base of the river and extending like two high parallel walls for about a couple of miles. On the hills on the right bank about 20 to 50 yards from the level of water , are carved out numerous huge figures of Hindu gods and goddesses — Shiva, Durga, Gonesh, &c. There was no man there from whom any enquiry could be made ; but the images

undoubtedly are of ancient dates. Some have fallen down, the rocks having broken. The cut of the face of the Durga, which is yet quite clear, is Indo-Chinese, with which that of the face of the Tipperahs bears marked resemblance — an evidence from which it is presumed that the images had been carved before there was any influx of Bengalis in these parts . The place undoubtedly called Deota- Mura from the figures of these gods and goddesses.

"21st March 1879 - Left Eksuree early in the morning and arrived at the Doomra Falls in the evening . The scenery of this place, particularly of the spot called DebDuar or Deb-Mura, where there are two vertical peaks through which the river runs, is most picturesque. At the Doomra Falls the river Gomtee virtually begins its course. Here there are two massive blocks of stone, which are called Dumburu, and from which the place has received its name. These blocks are about two and a half cubits apart from one another. Through them the river falls into a deep ditch of about 50 cubits in diameter, which serves as a reservoir for the Goomtee, which commences its course from it. Beyond the Doomra Falls there are, it is said, six other ditches of the kind at some distance from one another, each being situated upon a higher level than the one which is more contiguous to the Doomra Falls, with which all are connected by a narrow and almost imperceptible stream.

" 24th March 1879 - At Udaypore. Here are the ruins of the old capital of Hill Tipperah. Numerous shrines and mounents are still in existence, though very much decayed in state. There are Sanskrit inscriptions on the walls of many of these buildings, but the letters have been more less effaced from wear and tear, so the deciphering can be only done by learned pundits. Within the space occupied by the ruins there are in existence many tanks containing pure and sweet water which now quenches the thirst of only the beasts of the forests. Among the ruins is a big iron gun, which has attached to it a copperplate, with an inscription in the Persian and Nagri characters that unfortunately are now unintelligible. The gun is said to have been taken possession of from the Mahomedans by a former ruler of Tipperah."

WEATHER AND CROPS.

19. The rainfall recorded only at the Agency Office at Agartolah, where there has been a gradual decrease in the fall during the last three years as will be seen from the subjoined table : —

	YEARS.		
MONTHS	1876-77	1877-78	1878-79.
May	11.58	13.62	8.55
June	13.32	6.23	14.82
July	10.20	14.51	10.85
August	16.44	19.13	11.88
September	10.19	9.78	12.83
October	2.76	3.29	6.04
November	3.80	1.21	2.71
December	...	...	0.42
January	1.98	0.62	0.11
February	2.21	1.08	1.53
March	8.52	4.27	0.80
April	3.39	4.11	1.30
Total	84.39	77.85	71.84

20. On account of the deficiency of the fall of rain in the cultivating season, and the heavy pourings in September and October, the crop had generally suffered much. The outturn was less than that of the previous year, especially in the case of cotton in the hills.

Crops suffered in consequence.

21. The failure of the cotton crop has been a great misfortune to the hill people, who, of all the articles they grow in their jooms, can afford to sell for money only a portion of this commodity in order to pay their rents, to discharge their other debts, and also to make purchases of such necessaries as earthen pots, salt &c.

Distress on account of failure of cotton.

22. During the year an experiment was made on a small scale by the cultivation of Hingunghat cotton. Two localities were selected for the purpose — one in Hill Tipperah, and one on the Lalmaye Hills in the district of Tipperah. The experiment has not been successful, because the persons under whose supervision it was tried report that the seeds were sown too late in the season.

Hingunghat cotton.

23. Amun and aus rice and sugarcane, mustard, chillies, and tobacco are the principal crops of the plains. The yield of these crops last year was just sufficient for the people to live on, without depending upon supplies from outside.

Crops in the Plains.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND METERAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

24. The public health of the people has been generally fair during the year. Latterly cholera broke out in some villages in the plains and caused a few deaths. The great scourge of the hill people is the small - pox, which happily has not made its appearance for some time. Skin diseases there have been and are; but as these maladies are generally neither so violent nor so fatal, they are not much cared for.

Health.

25. The material condition of the people of the plains is rapidly improving, owing to the considerable extensions of cultivation which they are making. If the State had enjoyed a good reputation for its administration of justice, the lands of the plains would within a short time have been as thickly inhabited and as highly valued as those of the adjacent British districts. But unhappily the people have not so much confidence in the justice administered by the State .Their distrust is, however , on the wane and it is expected to be lessened on the introduction into the State offices of better men — an object which the Maharaja has in contemplation.

Condition of the people.

26. As to the meterial condition of the hill people , I am sorry I am unable to make any favourable report. They know little of skilled labour, of reading and writing they are fully ignorant; as day labourers they will not come to work in the plains, while in that capacity their services are not required on the hills. They are again improvident, idle and addicted to drinking. Under these circumstances it can not be expected that their material condition could be improved within any short space of time . They are further extermely unwilling to have any change introduced among them. On account of the failure of cotton , as noticed above, the hill people had a bad year to live in. Many could not pay their rents, while others were obliged to contract debts to buy neccessaries of life.

Condition of the Hill people.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE.

27. The hill people are nomads. Movements among them, both in and out of the State, are frequent. But these movements are not noted by the authorities, as they do not generally affect the

Movement within the State

revenue or otherwise cause any harm to the State. The revenue of a village or bari is paid on account of so many houses or families in which it may be divided, and not on account of so much land that the people hold; and when movement is necessary , the whole village moves and not house by house. So in a financial point of view the situation of a village is not a matter of much consideration to the State as long as it remains within its borders.

Movements out of the State.

28. People are known also to migrate from Hill Tipperah to the Chittagong Hill Tracts on the one side , and to Sylhet on the other and *vice versa*. Those who are in arrears of revenue, or are otherwise in debt to the State, which they cannot discharge, as also those who find suitable jooming lands in the neighborhood of their villages, smoothly go across the borders and make new settlements there. The egress is generally on a par with the ingress, and does not therefore much affect either the population or the revenue of the country.

No movements among the people of the plain.

29. Among the people of the plains there has not been any movement worth the name.

PRICES OF FOOD - GRAINS.

The hill people have little buying or selling among them.

30. The inhabitants of the hills have little selling or buying among them. Rice, chillies , cucumber and other vegetables, on which chiefly they live, they grow in their jooms. From the cotton produced also in the jooms are prepared at home the few cloths which they require. For salt and a few other minor necessaries only they depend upon others. These they purchase at the neighbouring markets in the plains at prices which may be current in the adjoining British territory.

Price of rice has increased at Agartolah.

31. At the market of Agartolah, which is the principal market in the whole State , the price of ordinary rice has considerably increased. It was twenty - six seers in the rupee in 1876-77; in 1877-78 it was nineteen seers; in 1878-79 thirteen seers only. The reasons which have generally been at work in causing the increase of the price of rice elsewhere have been at work here as well, viz., the short produce and consequent scarcity in other parts of India. There is no restriction now in the State in the matter of exportation.

Price of labour also has increased.

32. With the increase of the price of rice the price of labour has also increased.Skilled labourers in Hill Tipperah are only a few in number , and that few are all British subjects of the neighbouring districts. The wages of a blacksmith now amount to Rs.11 for a month, while in former times Rs. 8 only would have been sufficient. A carpenter now charges Rs. 12 per month, while formerly he would hardly get Rs.9.

Day labourers.

33. Day labourers also are difficult to be obtained . For the service of the public , people mostly of the weaver class , who come from Noakhally and Tipperah, are available at rates varying from annas three to annas four per diem. The resident people of the plains are all of them agriculturists, and are too well off to be in need of service as day labourers. The hill men, as said before, do not come to the plains to serve for wages. When, however, occasion requires it, every ordinary cultivator in the plains, as well as every hillman , is liable to serve the State as a coolie on receipt, of course, of due payment of hire.

MANUFACTURES.

34. The Poery and other cotton cloths prepared by the hill people are almost all the manufactures which can be named . The poery is a strong, soft, decent cotton carpet, which may be conveniently used for purpose of bedding. It is sold in the markets, but is prepared in too small a number and by the people of too limited a circle, to be able to attract the notice of the general body of Bengali traders. Preparation and circulation of this stuff on a large scale is highly desirable in the interests of the people, and it affords me pleasure to state that the Sub-Divisonal Officer of Koilashur, where only it is now prepared, is earnestly endeavouring to encourage the manufacture.

Poery.

35.The other cotton cloths mentioned above are made for home consumption , and are neither produced in the markets nor sold in the villages.

Other cotton cloths for home consumption.

MINES.

36. As to the existence of mines nothing can be pronounced with certainty. It is said that there are coal and iron mines far in the interior of the hills, but none has been discorvered yet , and there is neither capital nor enterprise to make endeavours towards any discovery.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

37. Trade between hill people and hill people is almost nil; that between hill people and Bengalies comprises the articles of cotton, til, timber, bamboos, and other forest produce, which are sold either at markets to the public, or at home to the creditors from whom advances are taken beforehand. The injurious practice of taking advances prevails to a great extent among the hillmen.

Trade among the hill people.

38. In the plains there are a few places where markets are held once or twice in the week, the shop-keepers for the most part being Bengalis of the neighbouring British districts, who carry on their trade without any restriction on the part of the State. On the hills no markets exist.

Markets few in number in the plains.

39. There is a prosperous and thriving bazar at Agartolah, where articles required for their comfort and convenience the people can find at all times of the day. At a convenient distance from the bazar there is a shop maintained by a Bengali British subject, from which the Maharaja draws all his supplies.

Agartolah Bazaar.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING ON GENERAL OR SPECIAL SUBJECTS.

40 Public feeling is almost out of the question among the people of the State, who from their position and want of education are incapable to take up for discussion any matter of general interest. All classes of the community are nearly blindly obedient to the Maharaja , whose voice is always supreme and indisputable.

Public feeling.

41. Under the above head, however, may be mentioned one subject, which for a time was a source of dissatisfaction and discontent among Thakurs, a class of influential people who are related to the Maharaja in one or more ways, and who constitute the only gentry of Agartolah

Domestic slavery.

outside the Rajbari. The subject I refer to is the prevention of domestic slavery reported last year.

42. Domestic slavery has now been effectually put an end to. Since the issue of the proclamation by the Maharaja, forbidding the keeping in pledge, or selling or purchasing a human being, a few persons, mostly females, who used to serve nearly as slaves in the houses of some of the Thakurs came out. They were allowed the liberty they asked for of going to live with their friends. At first this caused some irritation among the Thakurs, but the Maharaja, at my suggestion, personally explained to some of their leading members the justness of his proclamation, and expressed his determination of giving full effect to it . The matter was then again by beat of drum made known to the general public. Soon after this a few more slaves came out, mostly from the houses of Thakurs, and separately settled themselves according to their choices. Two women who used to attend on a daughter of the Maharaja came out as well , and were alowed to live outside without any objection. No sale, purchase, or taking in bondage of a human being is known, to have taken place since the date of the proclamation.

Its abolations.

THE PUBLIC PRESS.

None.

43. There is a printing press at the capital, where all State papers, as well as documents used in connection with the Maharaja's zemindaries,are printed. Works at the request of outsiders can also be executed on payment of due charges. No periodical or other paper has yet been started, and there is none likely to be started soon.

EFFECT OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES AND ARRANGEMENTS.

44. No such change have yet been effected, but the Maharaja intends to make some substantial alterations both in regard to officers and offices. He has now well understood that in point of efficiency his present administrative staff is not equal to their task , and wishes therefore to introduce better men.

STATISTICAL ENQUIRIES.

45. No such enquiries are known to have been undertaken by the State during the year under review. I have been able , however, to give below some account of the country and its people from the notes I made during my tours in the interior, and from previous reports.

46. The State contains an area of about 3,867square miles, a small portion of which only is under cultivation, the grater part being covered with jungle.

Area.

Population.

47. The population according to the census of1876-77 numbers about 91,759 souls and is divided thus —

Tipperahs, including the Tipperahs living in the plains as well as Nowatyas, Jamatyas, and Riangs		49,680
Hallams		4,955
Kukies		2,898
Munipuris		7,487
Bengalis	Hindoos	6,663
	Mahomedans	19,504
	Others	572
	Total	91,759.

Thus, speaking generally, it appears that of every one hundred of the Maharaja's subjects there are 54 Tipperahs proper, 6 Hallmas , 3 Kukies, 8 Munipuries and 29 Bangalis, and that in a square mile the population on the average is about twenty four.

Tipperahs differ in manners and language form Hallams and Kukies.

48. The Tipperahs proper, including the Puran Tipperahs, the Nowatyas, the Jamatyas, and the Riangs speak one dialect, the Hallams speak another, while the Kukies speak a different dialect of their own. There is, however, close affinity between the language of the Hallmas and that of the Kukies. There is affinity also between the customs and manner of these two sections of the people, who, it appears, originality came from the same stock. A Hallam will not object to marry his daughter to a Kukie, and vice versa; but the Hallam will of course prefer a Hallam, and the Kukie a Kukie. Tipperahs, as a rule, do not allow intermarriage with either the Kukies or the Hallams, and do not live close to place occupied by them. In the State, Tipperahs predominate in the south, Kukies and Hallams in the north.

Villages of the hill people.

49. The hill people generally live on low elevations which are close to streams locally called charrass, and are sometimes known by the names of such streams. They live in baris or villages which consist of clusters of houses erected on wooden platforms (manchas) three, four or five cubits above ground. In each house one or more families accommodate themselves without feeling inconvenience. In each bari a Chowdry holds the supreme power, who transacts for it all business either with the State or with others.

How large are they.

50. On the average a bari consists of about twenty house, each house having about five inmates. The people do not make any partition inside their houses, and do not yet feel inconvenienced even when two or three families have to dwell in the same house. For the unmarried young men and grown -up boys of the entire village there is often erected a separate house on a considerably higher manchas. Such a house is called ghurring.

No plough caltivation among the hill people.

51. There is no plough cultivation among the hillmen, whose harvests are obtained after jooming the hills, the modus operandi of which is now too well known to require any detailed mention. The system to plough cultivation, if introduced, is not likely to be much successfull, except perhaps in the parts which are adjacent to the plain lands. It is said that in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where it has been working for some time, it had not produced very favorable results.

Rents payable by the hill people.

52. The hillmen pay no land revenue except a fourth part of the cotton and oil-seed they produce in their jooms, and no cess of any sort, except the family tax,which is assessed at so much per house, and which varies in rates from Rs. 3 in the north to Rs 12 in the south per annum . The headmen of the baris. i.e. the Chowdhuries are held responsible for the realization of the tax

and its payment to the State.

53. The Maharaja' s wives and sons have hitherto been allowed to make "jolyes" i.e. servants of the hill people in all parts of the State, a privilege which lately was taken advantage of to so great an extent that it threatend to do serious harm to the State. At the intervention of the Agency Office (chiefly during the time of the late Officiating Political Agent), the Maharaja has since caused the system to be ceased. Under this system the jolyes were liable to their masters, and not to the State, for the due payment of their family tax, the rates of which, having been much lower than the prevailing rates, in consideration of the personal service which, when required, they had to do to their masters, acted as strong in inducements to their fellow brethern, who therefore sometimes become jolyes en masse, causing thereby considerabl loss of revenue to the State.

Jolyes do not pay rent to the State.

54 Frequently it was a matter of great difficulty to the tax collector to know who were jolyes and who were not: thus sometimes persons who were direct subjects of the State evaded the payment of their tax by declaring themselves to be jolyes. The position of a tax collector was never one of any great siginificance in the eyes of persons who proclaimed themselves as servants of the Jobaraj, or the Bara Thakur, or the Ranis. The poor officer therefore had to think over twice before he could proceed a single step in the matter of his collection.

They caused obstruction in the collection of tax.

55 The system was merely a source of income and aggrandisement to the members of the Maharaja's family. Its abolition therefore was advised, with the suggestion that all the jolyes should pay their tax to the State at full rates, and should be exempted from the liability of rendering service to their masters., who, in consideration of the loss they would thus sustain, might receive proper increase to their allowance from the State. The Maharaja has since accepted the advice, and the abolition of the system has been proclaimed.

The jolye system abolished.

56. Among the people of the plain there is nothing very interesting with the Bengalis — Hindus and Musulmans - who in every respect resemble their brethern of the British territory. One fact , however might be stated here for your notice, viz. the almost total absence of the class of people, men and women , who in the Bengal districts live by begging, and who so much abound there. The reason is clear. The Bengalis of the plains of Hill Tipperah, Hindus as well as Mahomedans, are all cultivators of land, from which they obtain enough of provision. They have therefore no necessity of taking to any base calling.

Bengalis of the plains.

57. Besides the Bengalis, there is another class of people who reside in the plains, viz., the Munipuris, of whom there are two sections - one called Kalasha and the other Khye. During some occasions of civil wars in their mother country they left it, with the head of the defeated parties, and never returned again. This is one of the many explanations I have received on enquiry of the cause of the immigration of these people into Hill Tipperah.

The Manipuris, how they came.

58. The Munipuris have better regard for cleanliness than the hill people, and live in houses which are constructed very nearly on the same plan in which the Bengalis make their homesteads. Unlike the hill people, they have among them, the institution of caste and the worship of idols, and what is most desirable, a total absence of the use of liquors and other intoxicating drugs. Unlike the hill people also they are desirous of improving their position,

How they stand in contrast with the hill people.

are willing to learn to read and write, and are (the Hindu section of them) strict vegetarians.

59. They are generally handsome and fond of singing and dancing, and in their way fashionable in regard to dress and ornaments; yet they are industrious and active, but mild and innocent. The Maharaja finds pleasure to admit them into his society, an honor of which they are deservedly proud.

Some traites of their character.

59 1/2. In the state there are Munipuri settlements at Agartolah, Bisalgurh, Berjoil, Kamalpur, and Koilashur. The men generally work in the fields as cultivators, and the women, in addition to the ordinary household business, perfrom every day a good deal of weaving, knitting, and sewing work, in order be able to offer to their daughters, at the time of marriage, a basketful of clothes for use in the husband's house. I have heard it said that after the marriage it is not customary for the bride to be allowed to go to her husband's house as long as a sufficient tasteful home-made clothes cannot be be offered by her parents. As a matter of fact, a Munipuri woman is hardly seen wearing a cloth which is not home-made, or on which some workmanship has not been performed at home.

Their employment.

60. Like the hill people this Munipuris in the country have no written language of their own. Their spoken language also is not the same throughout. The Khyes speak one language, while the Kalshas another, and the languages of both are different from the dialects spoken by the people of the hills. At the expense of the State elementary schools have been opened in some of the Munipuri settlements, where Bengali is taught.

Their language.

61. The principal hills of the State run parallel to one another, north and south. From these hills branches have jutted out east and west and have made the whole country a network of hills. The valleys between these hills are generally swampy, and therefore in there present state unfit for cultivation. In some of these valleys, however, there are large tracts of lands which have no swamps in them, and which are overgrown with reeds. These are abodes of wild elephants, and here khedda operations are carried on. In the Koilashur sub-division there are four, and in the Udaypore sub-division two khedda fields.

The hills, their situation.

62. The hills abound in bamboos, timber, cane, and other useful articles which Bengali traders bring down the rivers that flow through the country, paying tolls at stations situated at the borders of the State. Such articles are also carried overland by the residents of the adjoining British territory for their own consumption. These latter formerly refused to pay the due tolls, and even now the matter is a fruitful source of dispute and quarrel between them and the men to whom the revenue derivable from this source has been farmed. But the unwillingness of the former to pay the dues, and the inclination of the latter towards oppression, are both dying out daily, in consequence, it is belived, of increased attention now paid to the subject by the State.

Their produce.

63.The plains included in the State are long strips of fertile lands abutting on the British districts of Sylhet, Tipperah and Noakhally. They are of various breadths, the average of which will be about a mile and a half. A considerable portion of these plains is under plough cultivation, which nevertheless could be extended over more considerable areas, if cultivators were found. There is enough of cultivable lands, but there is none to take them ; for whatever ryot the State can bring must be had from the British territory, a task which it can hardly expect to accomplish, inasmuch as, in the present state of its administration, it can

The plains.

never hope to be able to give the ryot, for the security of his person and property, any guarantee of the kind that he has under British Government.

64. For administrative purposes the State is divided into three principal divisions, viz. the Sudder division with head-quarters at Agartolah, the Udaypore division with head-quartters at Sonamura, and the Koilashur division with head-quarters at Koilashur. The hill population reside mostly within the jurisdiction of the first and the last.

Division of the country for administritive purposes.
Three chief divisions.

65. In each division there are several thanas or police stations. Thus the Sudder division comprises two thanas, the Udaypore division has thirteen, and the Koilashur division three. The police have little to do in the hills, where cases of a serious character do scarcely occur. Should, however, any such cases take place in the hills, the parties generally come at once to Agartolah, where there is a special court of justice for them . This court is presided over by two Tipperah Thakurs who are conversant with the languages of the hill people.

Each division has many thanas.

66. Police stations are situated mostly along the borders. Some of them are in charge of darogahs on Rs. 20 each per month, and some in charge of jemadars who receive from Rs.6 to 10 per mensem. These officers work in the dual capacity of preservers of the peace and collectors of revenue on forest produce carried across the borders overland.

Situtations of police stations.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME AND CIVIL JUSTICS.

67. The condition of the general administration of the State has not much improved. The same officers are now at the head of Government as were in the preceding year, and consequently the same unsatisfactory state of affairs as was noticed in the last annual report is observable now.

General administration not much improved.

68. The Maharaja is an intelligent, polite, and kind-hearted person, who possesses much useful information on varies subjects; but as a ruler he is neither strong , nor always just. He is indeed affable harmless, and well meaning; but he lacks firmness of mind, resolution of purpose, and energy for continued work. His inclinations are chiefly towards the subjects of the Fine Arts, in many of which he is an adept; but he will not like to be busy with his State affairs often or long . He has, however, of late shown sign of improvement in this respect - a result, it is believed, of the advice he received from the Commissioner in November last.

The Maharaja.

69. His principal executive officers are Thakur Dino Bundhu Deb, his nephew, and Baboo Sambhu Chandra Mookerjee, of Baranagar, Calcutta. The former is called the prime minister, but more commonly known as the Nazir Swaheb; the latter has the title of minister-associate given to him. Both are perhaps unequal to the heavy duties they have to perform : the one,viz. the Nazir Saheb, for his want of sufficient general knowledge, and the other, viz.Baboo Sambhu Chandra, for his deficiency in energy , tact, and aptitude for business.

His principal officers at head-quaters.

70. At Agartoalh despatch of business is attended with much difficulty and can be finished only after great delay, owing apparently to the want of proper supervision on the part of superior officers. At the sub-division, however, the case is not so bad. Both the sub-divisional officers are well spoken of, particularly Baboo Durga Prasad Gupta, Deputy Surperintedent

His sub-divisional officers.

of Koilashur, in whose jurisdiction the people are living with satisfaction and in peace.

His zemindari officers.

71. The management of the Maharaja's zemindaries in Tipperah and Noakhally appears also in some cases not to be in the hands of the right men. In the zemendaries, as well as in the State, there are too many officers to allow work being done speedily, or with method and efficiency. Not to speak of the zemindari offices alone, in the mofussil civil courts, as well as in the civil courts of Comillah, the number of muktears and pleaders in the pay of the Maharaja is uselessly large. No employee feels that he is responsible for any work, because the responsibility is divided amongst many, and the results is that the Maharaja's cases in courts are either entirely lost, or gained at excessively high costs. It is said that the charges for collection and ordinary litigation amount to over 30 percent. — a rate, which, in the case of estates that in the aggregate yield over five lakhs a year, is undoubtedly high.

His estates in Thana Chagalnaya, Noakhally.

72. The Maharaja's zemindaries in Chagalnaya, which for some time gave trouble as well to the State as to the authorities of the district of Noakhally, are now under re-settlement. This work is reported to be at present going on smoothly. I am informed that the people of Chagalnaya are now in peace.

He is willing to introduce reforms.

73. The Maharaja has expressed his willingness to appoint men of superior qualifications to the higher posts in the State, and in that view has already applied for the services of the Agency head clerk. In this as well as in other matters he is willing to introduce reforms, but he is justly of opinion that reforms could be effected only very gradually. In the course of a conversation the other day, he said with a degree of pride that the present administration of the State, defective as it is, is infinitely better than what it was ten years previously; but frankly and gratefully admitted that whatever improvements have yet been effected in it are all owing to the kind advice and benign influence of the British Government.

Has shown sign of more attention to his besiness.

74. Quite recently at my suggestion he has prescribed a few statement forms in which the head offices of the State will submit to him every month all accounts of the administration. The forms are few and simple, but they will give all necessary information connected with the administration of the State and the management of the zemindaries, and will particularly how all arrears that might accumulate in any department — a point which, it is believed, will lead to ensure punctuality and despatch in every work.

Contemplates to open a new sub-divisional office in the south.

75. The head-quarters of the Udaypore sub-division, which are situated a few miles above Comillah, are not easily accessible to the people of the south, particularity to those who live on the other, i,e, the eastern side of the hills that separate Jagannath-dighi of the Tipperah district from Chagalnaya of Noyakhali. It is therefore contemplated that a new office on a small scale, for general administration, will be established somewhere about Bilonia on the river Mohari .

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION IN GENERAL.

76. The principal sources from which the State derives its revenues are—

Principal sources of revenue.

1. — Lands on the plains.
2.— Cotton (with oil seeds) grown in jooms on the hills.
3. — Forest produce.
4.— Kheddas.
5. — Family tax upon the people of the hills.

77. All the above sources except the last and a small portion of the first, are leased out to farmers. Minor sources also, as named in the accompanying revenue statement, are given in farms, the State remaining contented with its position of an annuitant.

They are mostly farmed.

78. The system of farming revenues has, in the report of the late Officiating Political Agent, been deprecated as injurious to the Raj and to the people alike. But it appears that khas management cannot be easily successful here, because the Maharaja himself, from the training that he has received, will hardly be able to exercise that amount of personal supervision which for a successful khas management of properties of the magnitude which he possesses is indispensable. Tax on forest produce, as well as cotton revenues, might be more advantageously collected under khas management, but for the interest as well of the State as of the people, it would be advisable to permanetly alienate the landed property under putnee grants, thereby making on the one hand the revenue more secure, and on the other the grantees more interested in the ryots and the lands. It is said with reference to the Chagalnaya zemindaries that, on completion of the settlement which is now in progress, putnee leases for a portion of them will be given to some of the principal resident ryots.

Farming system not beneficial.

79. Some of the petty taxes, such as the tax on parrots caught in the hills, tax on spinning wheels, &c. the objectionable character of which was noticed by the late Officiating Political Agent in his report for 1876-77, and on the existence of which the Government expressed its disapproval in its resolution on that report, have been abolished about the end of the year under review. No income under the head of any of them has therefore been shown in the annexed revenue statement.

Petty texes abolished.

80. It has not been customary to call upon the Maharaja to furnish accounts of the State expenditure. The financial position of the State cannot therefore be viewed in all its bearings. The accompanying revenue statement will show that the entire amount of receipts during the year under review was Rs. 1,95,134, against Rs.1,99,549 of the preceding year. It is said that this sum being insufficient to cover all its expenses, the State had to draw during the year more than a lakh of rupees from the income of its zemindaries.

Total collections.

81. It will be seen that there has been fluctuation of revenue, or, properly speaking, of collections of revenue under almost all the heads, most notably under the head of cotton, under which there has been a decrease of Rs. 16,228. Were it not for this, the collection would have been considerably in excess of that of the previous year.

Fluctuations of revenues collected.

82. A considerable portion of the lands in the plains has been lost to the State, having been given rent-free to various persons by way of favour, or in consideration of services received. Both in the State and in the zemindaries there is not a resident

Land revenue and affairs connected with the administration thereof.

Brahmin who, as the Bengali adage goes, " cooks his rice in another's land". It is said that nearly one-fourth of the landed estates has been given away as devatra lands, brahmatra lands, or service lands, and that one-eighth or more has been lost to the cultivators, having been dug for purpose of tanks. Indeed in Chagalnaya, as also in and about Comillah and along the side of the Trunk Road leading to Chittagong, one is struckwith the number, and sometimes the size, of the tanks that fall within his view.

Landed tenures.

83. The landed tenures in the State are neither of many kinds nor of any intricate nature. The greatest portion of the lands in the plains , if not the whole, was once in a state of waste. By granting taluki pottahs to enterprising cultivators, the State has reclaimed a considerable portion which is now under cultivation. Besides taluks , there are under them dar-taluks, and under dar-taluks the ryoti jotes. Some of the taluks are permanent , while others are meadi. Ryots have occupancy rights, which however, they can enjoy only as long as the enjoyment does not tend to mar the interest of any one of the Thakurs who are the principal talukdars. This matter, I am informed, has engaged the attention of the Maharaja, who contemplates framing some definite rules on the basis of the Bangal Zemindar and Tenants' Act.

Ijaras not included above.

84. Among landed tenures I have not mentioned the name of ijara, as the ijaradar acts only as an agent for the State . One fact, however, deserves to be noticed here. In the Koilashur sub-division there are certain Brahmins who call themselves zemindars of the lands they hold in the State. Their right of possession is said to be permanent and hereditary, and the lands are held at fixed and invariable rates. It is said that they stand in the same relation with the State as the Bengal zemindars do with the Government.

Entire land revenue collected.

85. The total receipts on account of land revenue amounted to Rs. 33,963, against Rs. 32,195 of the preceding year, showing thus an increase of Rs 1,768, which was due chiefly to extension of cultivation . The total demand was Rs. 35,480.

FAMILY TAX.

It is levied on each house.

86. As said before, this tax is levied upon each house under the personal occupation of the people living in the hills, the houses of the poor and the widows being exempted. The phrase "family tax" does not appear to be a correct interpretation of the cess, which is assessed upon each house in a village and not upon each family. Should two or three families live in the same house, a rare occurrence indeed in the hills, they would pay only one tax.

How assessed and realized.

87. The tax is is assessed and realized through the headmen. The assessment is generally made at Agartolah, where the headmen come for the purpose during the Dusserah time. The collection is made chiefly at the villages by a class of Tipperah peons called Binandias . The receipts last year fell from Rs. 20,541 to Rs. 19,705. The entire demand amounted to Rs. 29,859. The decrease in the receipts was owing to the extension of the jolye system noticed in paragraph 54 ante.

Forest produce.

88. The revenue derivable from this source is farmed out to serveral persons , who again have sub-let their farms to others. With the exception of sal, timber of all descriptions is allowed to be cut and carried away without restriction. The Maharaja intends to conserve sal plants with a view to see if trade of the sal wood could not be carried on successfully. The total collection during the year was Rs 39,572, against Rs. 38,104 of 1877-78 and Rs 22,935 of 1876-77. Though the receipts were thus nearly double of what they were two years ago, they did not yet come up to the full demand of the year, which

amounted to Rs.43,620.

FENNY GHAT.

89. The amount of the net profits of the State on account of the collection made at Amlighata, where tolls on forest produce gathered in Hill Tipperah and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and floated down the Fenny , are paid, was only Rs. 5,365 during the year of report. It was Rs 5,000 in 1877-78 and Rs, 8,625 in 1876-77. The decrease in 1877-78 was due to the very high rates which then prevailed, and which deterred parties from getting down any articles. The charges have since been reduced to a fixed of 10 per cent. ad valorem. The decrease of revenue during the year under notice is said to be due to undervaluation of the articles on which tolls are levied.

COTTON

90. The Maharaja gets one-fourth of the cotton and oil-seed produced in the jooms cultivated by the hillmen in lieu of rent in cash . The revenue derivable from this source has been farmed out to two up-countrymen, who in some places gather the fourth part of the Maharaja's due in kind and subsquently sell it for cash; and in others, with the permission of the State, impose upon the people a tax of from Rs. 1-4 to Rs, 1-12 for every maund or cotton, and from annas 6 to annas 12 for every maund of til sold by them.

Its share due to the State.

91. During the year under review the yield of the cotton crop was below the average, owing to the damages done to it by the heavy falls of rain in September last. The demand on account of cotton and oil-seed was Rs. 46,350; but the entire collection amounted to Rs. 39,397, showing thus a decrese of Rs. 16,228 in comparison with the receipts of the preceding year. The total quantity of cotton exported was 35,784 maunds.

Collection on account of cotton.

ROYALTY ON ELEPHANTS CAUGHT.

92. There was an increase of revenue derived under this head. Out of the six fields in the State only three were worked , viz. the Omersagar field on the Goomtee, worked by Mr. Larminie; the Deogang field in the Koilashur sub-division, worked by Shib Singh of Agartolah and others; and the Munnoo field, worked by certain inhabitants of Sylhet. By far the grater number of elephants were caught in Mr . Larminie's kheddas. The total amount of royalty received was Rs. 24,783 on 120 elephants, against Rs.20,391 on 110 elephants of the preceding year.

93. Government Khedda Department proposed to take a lease of all the khedda grounds in the State. The proposal was duly communicated to the Maharaja who declined it with thanks. The matter has already been separately reported on.

Government proposal about khedda lease.

94. Little income is derived by the State from these petty taxes. Under the hands of farmers these taxes used to unduly press upon the people . Their objectionable character was noticed in previous reports. I am now happy to have to say that most of them , viz. the Tota (parrot) Mehal, the Gurjun Mehal, the Sharisha Mehal, as well as the Charki Mehal (not shown in the statement), have already been done away with. Chona Shikar Mehal is also contemplated to be abolished. It is said that, if on enquiry it is found that gurjun trees exist anywhere in the State in a considerdarable number , or can be reared with success, the tax on gurjun oil will

1.Totah Mehal
2. Gurjan Mehal.
3.Sharisha Mehal.
4. Chona Shikar Mehal.

be revived. Gurjun trees are a fruitful source of income in the Chittagong` Hill Tracts.

95. There are extensive pasture grounds in the slopes of hills as well as in some villages and other places. On these grounds the Bengalis of the neighboring British territory tend their cattle. The State levies a tax of one rupee per annum on each full-grown buffalo, and annas eight on a calf, but makes no charge on account of cows and oxen . The revenue from this source fell from Rs. 2,857 to Rs. 2,193, owing, it is said, to the death from disease in the south of a large number of buffaloes.

Bufualo Mahal.

KHOTGARI MEHALS.

96. The unfairness of this impost is undeniable. It is levied on boats and rafts at certain trading places on the river Mohari in the Udaypore sub-division. Its rates vary from Rs. 1 to Rs 1-8. The revenue is gradually decreasing. It fell from Rs.1,409 in 1876-77 to Rs.1,282 in 1877-78 and to Rs.998 in the year of report.

KAZAI MEHAL.

97. The Kazi occupies the position of a Mahomedan Marriage Registrar, and the fees he collects and pays to the State are, as said in last year's report , similar to the registration fees realized on occasions of Mahomedan marriages in Bengal. The receipts of the last year fell to Rs. 253 from Rs 429 of the preceding year, owing it is belived, to the out break of cholera in the State in the month of Choitra (March), which interfered with the performance of marriage ceremonies, which among the Mahomedans generally take place in that month.

RENTS ON MARKETS.

98. Places occupied by shops in the markets are called chandni bhitis, and are let out in the State, as well as in the neighbouring British territory, at rates considerably higher than what are charged for lands otherwise occupied. The rates of rents for chandni bhiti at Agartolah varies from Rs.2 to Rs. 3 per house, which on the average occupies about a fourth part of a kani (a kani in these parts is equal to about half an acre), against Re. 1 to Rs. 1.4 per kani of other cultivated lands . The collection of revenue from this source was Rs. 722, against Rs. 274 of 1877-78 . The increase represents collections of arrears.

LAW AND JUSTICE FINES.

99. The accompanying statement of criminal cases shows some decrease as well in the number of cases enquired into, as in that of persons tried. But receipts from fines have nevertheless increased from Rs. 2,208 in 1877-78 to Rs, 4,181 in the year under report - a circumstance which tends to show that, in passing sentences of fine, proper discretion was not generally exercised by the magisterial officers. But on enquiry it has been found that the increase in the main represents realization of fines imposed during the previous year.

COURT FEES INCLUDING STAMPS AND PROCESS FEES.

100. The receipts have been slightly increased owing to the settlements of land revenue of a portion of pergunnah Agartolah, which took place during the year and which led to the institution of many civil suits.

101. The revenue under this head has increased from Rs.977 to Rs. 1,426, i,e, nearly 47 percent. The increase is explained by the fact of the extension of cultivation referred to before.

Cattle pound

ABKARI.

102. The increase is 25 per cent . over the last year's collections. Abkari revenue has been increasing since 1876-77, when it was Rs. 906; in 1877-78 it became Rs. 1,064, and in the year of report it rose up to Rs. 1,330. The increase, it is said , has resulted from increased attention paid by the State to the matter of keeping in force the rule which prevents exportation of liquor from the hills. The hill people pay no tax on account of the liquor they prepare for their own use. But they are not allowed to bring it down for sale to the people of the plains, where liquor is prepared under license received from the State on payment of a monthly fee of annas twelve if it is prepared for consumption as well as for sale, and of annas eight if it is made for consumption only.

Liquor, the preparation of the people.

103. For ganja, opium, as well as for European liquor, the people have chiefly to depend upon a Bengali trader, who keeps a shop in the Agartolah bazar. The rate of consumption of each article will be known from the following account of sales which the shop-keeper effected per month during the year of report :—

Ganja, opium, and European liquor

Ganja	20 seers.
Opium	$1\frac{1}{2}$,,
European liquor	30 bottles.

104. The pottadar of the grog-shop at Koilashur, noticed in last year's report , has placed it into the hands of new persons , who, it is said, are managing it more carefully and with greater regard for the customers than their predecessors. I enquired about the working of this shop when I visited Koilashur in April last, and found that it had been improved.

The Koilashur shop.

NAZAR.

105. The receipts under this head have increased from Rs, 1,064 to Rs.4,495 in consequence of considarable amounts of fees having been collected from the persons with whom permanent settlement of land revenue was made some time ago of a portion of pergunnah Agartolah noticed before.

ADDA MEHAL.

106. This is a chowkidari tax levied upon the subjects residing in the plains at the rate of annas twelve per house. There was a decrease of Rs.1,347 under this head, owing, it is said, to laxity in collection. The tax, as was reported last year, appears to be unfair, inasmuch as no chowkidar is maintained in any village.

GRASS MEHAL.

107. The mehal is farmed out in several portions, for each of which a fixed sum is payble by the farmers. The receipts under this head amounted to Rs. 2,206, against Rs. 2,872 of the preceding year. The difference is not very considerable.

MUNICIPALITY.

108. There in only one municipality in the State, viz. that of Agartolah. It has not worked very regularly. The receipts fell from Rs. 545 to Rs. 380 .

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(2), Statement of criminal cases — The total number of cases shows a small increase of 5, which it appears does not call for any remark. As in former years, the numberof complaints before the Koilashur sub-divisional court was the smallest. Over 45 percent of the cases were disposed of without trial, being rejected, compromised, or dismissed without enquiry. In 313 cases 698 persons were tried, of whom 6 died or escaped and 48 remained under trial at the close of the year. Of the rest, 53 per cent . were convicted, a result which shows that the Judicial officers are now paying more attention than before in sifting complaints in the beginning. In each of the preceding two years the percentage of conviction was below fifty. A few cases only deserve special notice.

(a) Agartolah Division — Culpable homicide. A woman, a subject of the State, stands charged with having caused the death of her niece with the assistance of her daughter, who is a British subject. The case is sub judice.

(b) Udayopore Division- Hurt inflicted upon a constable of the Maharaja's police by some British subjects, who entered into the State in a gang to cut and take away crop from certain lands for which they had not taken any settlement from the Maharaja's officers.

(c) Koilashur Division — Muder of a hillman (a Hallam) by a few person s of his own coumunity, all subjects of the Maharaja. The murdered man was a litigious person. His conduct in this respect was disagreeble to the members of his class, particulally to those who suffered by his litigation; the latter one day in the midst of the forest put an end to his life. The offenders have since been severely punished, some being sentenced to 14 year's rigorous imprisonment. The offence proved was culpable homicide.

(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in criminal cases. — Appeals against orders of sub-divisional officers are almost nil, owing to the great distance of the sub-divisions from the sudder station, where the appellate courts are situated. The number of appeals in civil as well as in criminal cases is therefore always small , and is no criterion of the justness of the decisions of the subordinate judicial officers. Of the 27 persons who appealed before the first Appellate Court 10 were successful, and the case of one was pending at the close of the year. The special Appellate Court hears appeals against the decision of the first Appellate Court, the Sessions Judge and the Hill Court.

(4) Statement of cases in which British subjects were concerned . — The total number of such cases was twenty -seven . In 12 the complainants were British subjects. In 115 British subjects were defendants , of whom the entire number brought to trial during the year was 131. From the return, it will be seen that of the total number tried nearly 61 per cent. were convicted.

(5) Statement of cases in which warrants were issued by the Political Agent . — Such cases are gradually decreasing for reasons mentioned in reference to the next following statement. Of the 52 persons against whom warrants were issued, ten were arrested and made over to the Hill Tipperah courts. Of the remainder, 18 (43 percent)surrendered of their own accord, evdently because they could not for a long time afford to stay away from Hill Tipperah, upon which in various respects , but chiefly in respect of trade in forest produce, they had to depend for obtaining means for their livelihood.

(6) Statement of cases in which certificates were issued by the Political Agent under section 9 of Act XI of 1872 for trial in British territory — No case occurred during the year in which the Political Agent's certificate under section 9 was required to be issued . The two cases shown in the return were pending from the preceding year. Cases along the borders used chiefly to arise from matters in connection with the realization of rents on

account of forest produce. These matters are now more settled than before. Few cases therefore now arise from this source. In the few that do arise warrants are readily applied for on the part of the Maharaja's office, under the supposition , it is belived, that the cases would be certified for trial in the British district courts. The cases generally remain pending until the accused are arrested in this State.

(7) Statement of civil suits (original) — The Maharaja's office does not state the value of suits. The suits instituted during the year were 181 for recovery of money on contracts, 9 for the price of goods sold , 5 for damages, 37 for recovery of rent, 39 for possession, and 10 for other claims. There were two suits of a value of over Rs. 500 each. Of the total number of 252 cases disposed of during the year, only about 22 percent . were contested, the number gained by the defendants being nearly equal to the number decided in favour of the complainants.

(8) Statement of appeals in civil suits . — Appeals were more quickly disposed of this year than before. There were only six cases pending at the end of the year, against 32 that remained at the close of the preceding year. With the one case in which the orders of the lower court was modified, and the two that were remanded, it appears that the result was favourable to the appellants in 37 percent. of the appeals. The number of appeals before the Khas Appellate Court was small , as well in the civil as in the criminal side.

(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subjects were concerned — Compared with the return of 1877-78 , the statement does not show any palpable difference either in the entire number of suits, or in the number in which British subjects were complainants. The number in which British subjects were defendants was small. It fell from 12 to 7. I will probably continue to be small as long as the decrees of the Hill Tipperah courts against British subjects are not allowed to be executed in British territory — a privilege which in their present state of efficiency the courts do not appear to deserve to possess.

JAILS.

114. In connection with the notice of the working of the courts may be mentioned the subjects of jails. The Agartolah Jail consists of a few thatched buildings within an enclosure of split bamboos; formerly males and fermales situated to be kept in houses situated in the same compound. On my pointing out the impropriety of this arrangement, a separate enclosure has been made for the latter; few, females, however, have to be admitted into the Jail. There is a good lock-up at Koilashur, and one has been built at Sonamura.

MILITARY FORCE.

115. The force has been reduced from 349 to 239 ; but better arrangements have been made for the distribution of its pay . A branch of revenue, viz. the income from forest produce obtained at certain toll stations has, as recommended in last year's report, been specially allotted for the purpose. This has been a move in the right direction , and it is hoped that the effciency of the force will now be increased.

Its stiengh

GOORKHAS FOR FRONTIRE SERVICE

116. The Maharaja's service has not been at any time attractive to Goorkhas. Attempts, however, are now earnestly being made to enlist men of that nationality; but as yet no great success has followed. For guarding the posts in the north - eastern borders it is required, under Government orders, that a force of 105 men with

a reserve of 30 men, should be maintained by the Maharaja, and that among them the number of Gookhas should be at least 70 ; but 54 only of this class are now in the service.

FRONTIER POSTS.

117. The poats are situted at Kamalpur , Chira Kuti, and Dharmanagar, all in the Koiashur sub-division. There is a good stockade in each . The stockades at Kamalpur and Dharmangar are quite new, having been constructed during the year of report . That at Chira Kuti is old, but yet sufficiently strong. I inspected it in April last and found that it was in good order. Besides these , there is a military post at Udaypore in the interior, and one at Eksuree in the south -eastern borders. The former is kept occupied throught the year , and the latter only during the raiding season. The question of establishing communication between the frontier force of the State and that of the Chittargong Hill Tracts for purposes of mutual support is under consideration of the Government.

No cause of any disturbance in the Frontiers.

118. There has been no real cause of any disturbance in any part of the forntier during the year. The Kukies and other hill tribes residing in the State are indeed much more afarid of the Lushais than even the people living in the plains, owing of course to the calamities that in days gone bye were used to be inflicted upon them by the Lushais, whose very name now strikes terror among them. In January last, as noticed before, a false rumour reachad the south -eastern side of the State that there was a rising of the Lushais in their country, and though vague in the extreme, the information was a source of some trouble to the people.

Generl state of communications, schools, &c.,

119. Means for communication with the interior are much in want. There is no road on the hills and none in the plains, except at Agartolah ,where there is one between the two seats of the Maharaja's residence, one connecting the bazar and the Agency Office with the new Rajbari, and one connceting the latter with some of the houses of the Thakurs.These are all unmetalled.

Road from Agartolah towards Kusbah.

120.Sanction has been accorded by the State to the estimates for constructing a road from Agartolah to the borders towards Kusbah to meet another which is being counstructed by the Road Cess Department from Kusbah towards Agartolah. Work according to the estimates sanctioned will be commenced by the beginning of the next cold season.

SCHOOLS.

121. The number of schools has increased from 18 to 25, and that of students from 430 to 700. Numerically the progress is satisfactory . But it is belived that more attention is paid to increase the number of schools than their efficiency. With the exception of the one at Agartolah, they are all elementary vernacular patshalas. During my tours I inspecied some of the schools in the interior. The Agartolah Anglo- Vernacular School was visited more than once. This school, which is the principal institution in the country, is in an indifferent state. Without attempting to improve its condition, the State has quite recently sanctioned the establishment of a Normal School , for which no necessity appears to exist. I have on many occasions had conference with the Maharaja on the subject of the education of his children, for whom the appoinment of a special tutor is now contemplated. There was a tutor before, but he has long since left his post. From the return it appears that the Thakurs, the Tipperahs, and Munipuris, especially the last, are now more forward than before in sending their children to schools. This is cheering.

122. There are three dispensaries in the State-one at Agartolah, one at Sonamura, and one at Koilashur — of which the first only is provided with a separate establishment, the other two being in charge of the local jail doctors. The expenses incurred by the State on account of medicines and medical men might, if administered properly, do a great deal more benefit to the people than what they receive now.

Dispensaries.

123. The Municipality of Agartolah in not in a good state. Former Political Agents held it to be unsuitable to the place. Its present circumstances are anything but promising. No metting of the Commitee is known to have taken place during the year.

Municipal.

124. There was formerly an Educational Commitee, which has long since been abolished. I suggested to the Maharaja the necessity of re-establishing it. Some time ago a meeting was accordingly called, in which I was requested to be present. Among other matters it was settled in the meeting that the Educational Commitee should be revived, and that the members therefore should undertake to visit the local schools periodically.

Education

POST OFFICE.

125. There is a post office in conection with the Agency. It is under the supervision of the Government Postal Department, but is maintained entirely at the expense of the Maharaja, who pays Rs 40 per mensem towards its expenses. It has worked well during the year, and is quite sufficient for the requirements of the place.

MICELLANEOUS.

126. The system of making budget estimates has been introduced into the revenue administration of the State; but it cannot be said that it has produced the desired effect : for where the will is the law, there the system can not work with success. It is, however, beneficial in its way, as it gives to the officers of the State, and to the Maharaja himself, an oppoptunity of discussing matters regarding income and expenditure. The State cannot meet all its expenses by its own revenue; it has therefore to depend upon the income from its zemindaries. The debts noticed in the last report have been paid off this year to the extent, it is said, of Rs. 30,000.

Budget.

127. For some years the State had to be troubled by costly litigation in the British courts, first with the Maharaja's half - brother, Nil Krishna Thakur, and then with his nephew , Kumar Nobodeep Chandra, both of whom, however, lost their cases. The latter is preparing now to bring a suit for maintenance, for which he has obtained permission from the Government.

Litigation.

128. In conlusion, I beg to state for your notice that, during my incumbency, the Agency clerk, Baboo Hara Charan Nandi, who is an intelligent and trustworthy person, has always performed his duties satisfactorily.

Character of officers.

Statement showing the amount of Revenue derived from all sources in 1878-79

Serial Number	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Receipts in whole rupees in 1877-78	Receipts in whole rupees in 1878-79	AS COMPARED WITH 1877-78		REMARKS.
				Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1	Land revenue from plain lands	32,195	33,963	1,768	....	
2.	Family tax in the hills	20,541	19,705	....	836	
3.	Tax on forest produce	38,104	39,572	1,468	....	
4.	Ditto Ditto on the Fenny	5,000	5,365	365	....	
5.	Tax on cotton and oil-seeds	55,625	39,397	....	16,228	
6.	Royality on elephants caught	20,391	24,783	4,302	....	
7.	Patrrol mehal	18	....	....	18	
8.	Gurjon oil mehal	68	....	....	68	
9.	Buffalo garazing mehal	2,857	2,193	....	664	
10.	Khotgari mehal	1,182	998	....	184	
11.	Sharisha (mustrad oil) mehal	60	....	....	60	
12.	Chona Shikar mehal	104	63	....	41	
13.	Kazai (kazi's fees) mehal	429	253	....	176	
14.	Rents of markets	274	722	448	....	
15.	Law and justice Fines	2,208	4,181	1,973	....	
16.	Ditto Ditto Stamps and court fees	6,679	7,035	356	....	
17.	Ditto Ditto process fees	647	818	171	....	
18.	Ditto Ditto Cattle pounds	977	1,426	449	....	
19.	Ditto Ditto abkari (excise)	1,064	1,330	266	....	
20.	Nazars	1,069	4,495	3,426	....	
21.	Adda (chowkidar tax) mehal	3,538	2,191	....	1,347	
22.	Cham Khollas (thatching grass) mehal	2,822	2,206	....	616	
23.	Municipal tax	545	380	....	165	
24.	Miscellaneous	3,152	4,058	966	....	
	Total	1,99,549	1,95,134	15,988	20,403	Decrease on the whole - Rs. 4,415

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR 1879-80

No. 1419, dated Comillah, the 24th August 1880.
From - F. Jones Esq, Magistrate, and ex-officio Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,
To-The Commissioner of the Dacca Division.

I Have the honour to forward the report and annual statements of the Hill Trpperah Political Agency for the year 1879-80, submitted by the Assistant Political Agent, Babu Umakanth Das.

2. No events of importance occurred during the twelve months under review. The condition of the people, especially of those living in the plains, appears to have been prosperous throughout the year. The crops were good, and there was no epidemic disease.

3. In forwarding the last annual report the Commissioner (Mr. Pellew), remarked that further endeavours must be made to enlist Goorkhas for the Maharajah's military force, and the Maharajah deputed a recruiting party to the districts bordering on Nepal for the purpose, who succeeded in enlisting 10 men. More men would probably have been obtained, but for orders received from Government directing the recall of the party. Four other Gookhas came of their own accord to Agartala to offer themselves as recruits, and their services were engaged. The increase in the number of Goorkha sepoys in the force therefore amounts to 14 men.

No. 75, dated 8th January 1880.

4. The only reform introduced into the administration of the State was the abolition of the system of farming the revenue from cotton. This appears not to have been financially successful, but it is a step in the right direction; and if only ordinary care is exercised, I believe it will result not only in putting an end to a great deal of oppression of the hill people, but ultimately in increasing the revenue of the State. It is to be hoped that the Maharajah will gradually do away altogether with the farming system in every department of the Revenue; but as pointed out by the Assistant Political Agent, several influential members of the Maharajah's family are interested in its maintenance, and it is probable that it will be long before this evil system is abolished.

5. The Assistant Political Agent has given good advice to the Maharajah on several points during the year, as stated in his report. The suggestion that the subordinate officers should go out on tour every year in the dry season is a particularly good one, and has been carried out by the Maharajah's orders.

6. The Assistant Political Agent during his tour visited the whole of the guard posts, and reports that they were all in good order and properly garrisoned.

7. The orders of the Maharajah prohibiting domestic slavry have been carried out during the year under report, though the Thakurs are still opposed to this reform.

8. On the whole, I think that there has been some progress, though no doubt slight, made in the administration of the State during the year. The great obstacle to improvement, as reported in former years, is the easy, indolent, good-nature, bordering on weakness of the Chief of the State himself.

9. The Agartola road which, when completed, will afford direct communication between Commillah and Agartale has made good progress during the year, and it is hoped that it will be completed next dry season. The Hill Tipperah portion leading from the district boundary to Agartola (about 3 miles) has, I regret to say, not yet been begun.

10. The Assistant Political Agent has in my opinion conducted his duties with discretion and judgment

during the year, and his report, though rather lengthy, is full and interesting, and leaves no matter of importance untouched.

Dated Agartola, the 10th july 1880.
From- Baboo Umakanth Das, Assistant Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,
To -The Magistrate of Tipperah, and Political Agent, Hill Tipperah.

I Have the honour to submit the following annual report on the administration of the Hill Tipperah Political Agency for the year 1879-80.

CHIEF EVENTS OF THE YEAR.

2. The year was an uneventful one, inasmuch as no occurrence worth any particular notice took place during the period. The general business of the State went on as before, slowly and feebly, and therefore noiselessly attarcting in a few cases the notice ot the public on matters which were possessed of some importance and interest, such as :-

I. The substitution of khas for the hitherto prevailing farming system for managing the cotton mehal. The entire cotton revenue, which on the average comes up to nearly a fourth part of the entire income of the State, was, from a long time, used to be collected through two joint farmers, whose lease having terminated during the year, the mehal was held khas, but not with very satisfactory results as the sequel will show.

Cattons mehal brought under khas management.

II. The beginning which has been made of a system of letting in patni taluks the lands of the Maharajah's zemindari in thana Chagalnya, zillah Noakolly. For this purpose the lands of certain pargannas have already been measured. Settlements are to be made with well-to-do resident riots, and, in want of them, with outsiders. But the rate at which the work is progressing is very slow, and if the whole of the Chagalnya zemindari is to be let away in patni taluks, the work cannot be finished before the end of a long series of years.

System of grating patni taluke introduced.

III. The institution about the close of the year, by Kumar Nabaddip Chandra Thakur, as a pauper, of a suit for maintenance, under permission granted to him by Government in Mr. Secretary Macaulay's letter No. 825, dated the 25th February 1878. The Kumar has availed himself of the opportunity of entering into his plaint a claim for the Jubrajship, The case is now sub judice.

Suit by Kamar nabaddip Chandra Thakur.

ANNUAL TOURS.

3. During the year of report, I was absent on privilege leave for a month from the 16th of October 1879, and was out on duty, on tour, for 97 days, a period during which I travelled through the interior of the Maharajah's territory, observing the state of the country, the condition of the people, and the general and special arrangements for administration in the three divisions, viz Agartola, Udaypore and Koylashar. Almost every important place was visited, particularly the sub-divisional head-quarters, the frontier guard posts; the police thanas and outposts, as well as toll-stations, schools, dispensaries and bazars. I visited also many Tipperah and Kukie villages situated in the interior.

Duration tours

4. The country, as described in previous reports, is a complete net-work of hills, covering, on the whole, and

State of the country

area of 2,869 square miles, The hills are of various degrees of hight, the highest peak of the highest range being about 1,860 feet from the level of the sea. The valleys are numerous, many of which are considerably large and fertile. But many more are marshy and unculturable.

5. The ancient rulers of the hills did not use to live in Agartola, the present capital of the State. They resided in different places at different times; so when traveling in the interior at the present day, one is delighted to find in the midst of thick forests, marks of the glory and splendor which the country once possessed. His eyes are greeted with ruins of ancient buildings made of massive stones; with beautiful tanks which still contain fresh water; and with images of Hindoo gods and goddesses, many of which, in regard to size and workmanship, are indeed striking. Such ruins can be seen in many places, but chiefly in Udaypore, Amarsagar, Puran, Rajbari and Dharmanagar.

Ruins in several places.

6. On the Unakuti hills, the idols are very numerous. The hills themselves have taken their name from the number of figures of gods and goddesses they contain, Unakuti meaning ten millions, minus one. There, three entire peaks are covered with images, all of solid stones, and some very huge, the circumference of the head of Kumbha-Karna alone measuring 18 feet 4 inches. Many of the images are yet full and clear, but many more are defaced and broken. There is no Hindoo village in the vicinity, the nearest inhabited place being the Kukie village of Rajah La Bam Kham, about four miles distant. I visited the place in January last, and availed myself of the opportunity of searching for any inscription that might be found about the figures. But none was obtained. The images are lying exposed without any temple.

Images of idols on the Unakuti hills.

7. The State is possessed of many resources which might be turned into good account, if neccssary capital and effort could be employed. In the forests on the hills, and in the valleys in the interior, are sal, sissoo, and other valuable timber trees, as well as garjan and dhup plants, which, if carefully looked after, with a view to be cut and brought to the plains in good season for sale, might be the source of no small amount of wealth to the State. The Maharajah has already arranged for and commenced a trade in wood, and has for that purpose appointed an officer in Sonamura. But the scale of operation contemplated is limited, and the person entrusted with the business, though a good and trustworthy man is, on account of age, incapable of active work, so the success of the scheme is doubtful.

Resources of the State - Forest.

8. Another source of wealth can be found in the elephant fields, in which the State abounds in almost all its parts; and the fields of Hill Tipperah are said to be the best and the most profitable that can be found in India. But under its present pecuniary condition the State cannot undergo the necessary expenses of any khedda operations. The Government of India, at the instance of the Khedda Department, once proposed to have a lease of the elephant hunting-grounds, but the negotiations which were carried on in that behalf were not successful.

Elephent hunting tracts.

9. A third source of wealth lies in the fitness of the soil of the country for the cultivation of tea. Indeed one passing through the south of Sylhet is struck with the contrast which the hills exhibit, the Sylhet side of them being clear and open, and decked with the green verdure of tea plantations, while the Hill Tipperah side is all waste being covered with deep and impenetrable forest. For want of capital and will, the State is unable to commence any speculation in this direction, and it does not seem to be likely that foreign enterprises will be looked upon with favor by the Durbar.

Lands fit for tea cultivation

10. The higher hills, and valleys far in the interior, are generally uninhabited, the lower elevations being occupied by Tipperahs and Kukies of various clans. On the plains in the valleys, adjoining British, Territory, live Bengalis, Manipuris and a few Assamese.

Lower elevations only inhabited

11. Population is very sparse; on the whole according to present accounts there are about 91,759 souls. Detailed information on this subject will be gathered in the next cold-weather when a regular census will be taken.

Population thin.

12. The inhabitants of the plains in their mode of living and in every things else, resemble their neighbours of the adjacent British territory. But the hill people are more or less savage, the wildest sect being that of the Kukies.

The hill people savage.

13. In the State, according to present calculation, there are about 3,000 Kukies in all, who have among them seven Cheif, each Chief having from three to five hundred persons under him. The Chiefs do not derive any direct revenue from their people, but are assisted by them in cultivating their jooms and in constructing their dwelling-houses, and in return supply them with provisions in times of scarcity and otherwise help them when required.

Chiefs of Kukies.

14. There are in all 16 classes of Kukies; but eight classes only can be seen in the State, viz. one the Amrae; two, the Pyetoo; three, the Chotlang; four, the Khareng; five, the Byefae; six, the Chanlew; seven, the Biate; and eight, the Baite. But these eight, as well as the remaining classes, viz nine, the Ralte; ten, the Rhauchal; eleven the Ranchie; twelve, the Chailai; thirteen, the jaugle; fourteen, the Patlei; fifteen the Betlu, and sixteen, the Paite, can all be met with in the country to the east of the frontiers where they are known in their language by the name of Lushais or Khachaks, the former being derived from Loo - head, and Chai-to cut, or those who decapitate; and the latter from Kha-house and Chak-east; or those who live in the east.

Classes of Kukies.

15. Unlike Tipperah villages in each of which there is a headman, one or more Kukie villages own the authority of a Chief. Every Chief has a vizier next to his house to help him with advice in times of emergency, and a gomasta in each of his villages to transact, in the Maharajah's local court, business of ordinary character. By their subjects the Chiefs were always called Rajahs. But the State has now adopted the policy of formally conferring on them titular distinctions. Thus about five years ago, one Thoma Rajah, was made a Jung Bahadoor, and in the year of report, a Chief by name Lalja Chya has been made a Rajah.

Kukie Chiefs called Rajah.

16. As the Chiefs do not get any rent from their people, so in their turn they do not pay any revenue to the State. Occasionally, however, they make presents of tusks and other things to the Maharajah, and thereby acknowledge his authority. In times of emergency, they are said to be serviceable to the State for which they are prepared to carry arms to the field, a work which undoubtedly was entrusted to them in days gone by, and for which perhaps they were exempted from the payment of any rent.

They do not pay any revenue to the State

17. Now, however, in an indirect way, the State collects some revenue from these people. The manner in which this is done is as follows, - like the rest of the people of the hills, the Kukies, with other crops, grow cotton in their jooms. A fourth part of the produce is taken by

Chauth of their cotton taken by the State.

the State as its share. It is however not taken from Kukies themselves, but from the traders who purchase it from them. The article therefore is always sold at a discount. While in Koylashar, I observed, in the local bazar, that traders and petty dealers obtained cotton from the Kukies in lieu of things sold to them; and in the evening, at the close of business, brought all the cotton they thus obtained to the Maharajah's local agent by whom it was weighed. After weighment, some paid to that officer the fourth part in kind and others in money, the amount being calculated at rates previously fixed for the purpose. If a Kukie does not sell any part of the cotton he obtains from his joom, but keeps the whole for his consumption at home, the State does not touch it.

Kukies afraid of the Lushais.

18. The Kukies of this country are as much afraid of the Lushais as the people living in the plains. Their fear becomes exceedingly great during the cold season, which is the most suitable period for raiders to come in. In December last, I once found the entire body of the Boong Dopta, a class of Hallams with some Tipperahs, in all about 300 persons, sheltered in the thick forest to the west of the Kamalpore police station. They had left their homes for fear of the Lushais. On inquiry it was found, as reported at the time, that the fear was entirely ground less, but yet it was with no small difficulty that the State officers succeeded in inducing them to return to their villages.

Their fear may cause mischief.

19. There were other desertions of the kind the year, but all in the Kailashar sub-division, the Agartola, and the Udaypore quarters were not disturbed. It is necessary as much as possible to prevent such cases of needless abandonment of villages from being repeated. For, showing as they do the people's want of confidence in the administration, they tend to encourage enemies to come in. Reports of such desertions do not remain confined to limited areas and may some time extend to the country of the Lushais.

State officers have began to travel in the interior.

20. For the purpose of giving re-assurance to the people, and for enquiring into their condition and wants, the State, according to my suggestions made last year, has commenced to send out its officers on tour during the cold season. Thus the Magistrate of Agartola was out during the last cold-weather and inspected the thanas of his jurisdiction. The Deputy Superintendent of Koylashar was similarly out for a length of time. During my tour in Dharmanagar and other places in the Koylashar sub-division, he almost invariably kept company with me.

THE WEATHER AND CROPS

Rain fall.

21. The following is a comparative table of the fall of rain recorded at Agartola during the last two years :-

Months.	years 1878-79	1879-80
May	8.55	11.20
June	14.82	10.92
July	10.85	14.66
August	11.88	11:85
September	12.83	14.69
October	6.04	7.98
November	2.71	.....
December	0.42	0.64
January	0.11	0.55
February	1.53	2.56
March	0.80	11.60
April	1.30	1.70
Total ...	71.84	88.35

22. For the first time since the last four years, the record shows an increase of rainfall. The fall during the year of report, was as well distributed as it was abundant.

It was abundant.

23. The heavy downpour from july to September was favourable to joom crops, particularly to rice, while the fall in March which had no winter crops to injure, as no such crop is grown on the hills, kept the temperature cool and thus acted beneficially in a sanitary point of view. The winter crops ground on the plains are few; they are mustard, chilies, tobacco and sugarcane. But none are cultivated to any large extent.

It was faverable to crops.

24. The principal produce of the State is rice, of which there was a bumper crop during the year; and on the hills the outturn was so large that the people left a great portion of the produce on the jooms, carrying home only the quantity they required for consumption. There being no roads on the hills, Bengali traders cannot take down the surplus, whenever there is any, which is therefore always lost, being eaten up by wild beasts .

Principal crops rice and cotton.

25. The next important crop in the State is cotton, which is cultivated only in the hills. The outturn during the year was a little less than the average.

26. Another important crop grown in the joom is til. This is the only crop besides cotton which is exported from the hills. It is not cultivated to any large extent. The yield during the year was about the average.

Til.

27. None of the plain crops, as a rule, are exported from the State, the produce being generally only sufficient to meet the local demands. If however the people wished it, they might more largely cultivate chillies, tobacco, sugarcane as well as rice for the purpose of trade. Exportation of food-crops is allowed by the State. But the surplus available for exportation is generally small, as the people always keep large stocks in hand to meet contingencies.

Crops grown on the plains are not exported.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

28. Generally speaking, the people enjoyed very good health during the year. There was no outbreak either of cholera or of small-pox anywhere in the State. The Maharajah is particularly careful to have all sorts of timely measures adopted for guarding against the breaking out of cholera. Fever is the most prevalent disease in the country. But comparatively speaking, the people suffered much less from it during the year than before.

Public health was good.

29. The general climate of the country is not unhealthy. But there is want of good drinking-water particularly in the dry season, to which much of the illness from which the people occasionally suffer is attributable.

General climate not bad.

30. As reported last year, the people of the plains are doing well by means of their agriculture, which, for reason of fertility of the soil and low rates of rent demanded by the State, is indeed very profitable. The quantity of cultivable lands is much in excess of what is required, and would be sufficient to support a population many times more than the existing number.

The people the plains well-off.

31. The bulk of the people are of the lower orders, and are mostly Mahomedans. They live in a rural state and are happy in their way, knowing few wants and having the means to supply what they know.

.The people are generally of the lower orders.

32. Along the line bordering on British Territory, there are, however, some people whose state is different. They are generally released convicts of British jails, who have left their original place of abode in British Territory, either because they were hated there by the society in which they lived, or because they wanted to get away into lands where, on the occurrence of a criminal case in their neighbourhood, the British police could no longer easily treat them with severity. During the year of report, eleven men of this description came in from the district of Tipperah, and two from Noakhally. The state of these people, as might be expected, is generally bad, and sometimes exceedingly so.

Some of the borderers not well circumstanced.

33. The condition of the hill people is not as good as that of inhabitants of the plains. The majority of them are embarrassed, having borrowed money from Bengali traders at exorbitant rates of interest which they cannot pay up with ease. On many an occasion they receive from the traders advances on condition that within a certain time, bamboos, timber or other forest produce of specified quantity and quality they should give them in return. This system of receiving advances is more or less prevalent among the people throughout the State. It is particularly so in the Udaipur sub-division, where many thousands of rupees are said to be thus laid out by mahajans among the inhabitants. The sub-divisional officer of Udaypore once thought of making arrangements for the payment of the whole of this sum, and for its gradual recovery from the debtors afterwards. But eventually he abandoned the idea, finding that the amount required for the purpose was more than what he could spend. He is now of opinion that the hill people cannot do without their mahajans, to whom alone they have to look during times of scarcity as well as during Kists of the State revenue.

Hill people not generally well-off.

34. The principal source from which the hill people can obtain any money is cotton. But they cannot make much of it, because they cannot sell it to the advantage for reason of obligations incurred under

Why not

the above-mentioned system of receiving money in advance; and also for reason of their inability to come down to British districts to trade with the natives, whose language they cannot easily understand, and by whom their dialect is less understood.

35. But withal the hill people appear to be quite contented in their situation, which they neither know, nor care to know, how to improve. Simple, unambitious, but unwise, they do not appear to have any anxiety for the future, or any idea of a better condition, being satisfied with Nature's primitive state of blissful ignorance in which they live.

They are satisfied in their condition.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, OR OTHER INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE.

36. There is hardly any movement among the people of the plains. On the hills, however, during the winter, Bengalis of the neighboring British districts of Chittagong, Nokhally and Tipperah are found engaged in cutting wood, bamboos and thatching grass, These people come up in bodies at a time. They build shelters on river-sides, where they remain sometimes for months and work in the neighbouring forests. They proceed as far up as the rivers by which they come, are navigable. They are known by the name of Bankamlas, that is, labourers working in forests. On the banks of the Goomti I have seen them at work as far up as Amalkhan Dewan's bari, close to the Doomra falls. The sides of the Fenny, Goomti, Howrah and Manee are thus temporarily occupied during the cold season, each river having then on its banks hundreds of men at a time.

Movements on the hills. Workmen in forests.

37. Another class of men, also Bengalis of the adjacent British Territory, come upon the hills during the same period, i.e, winter and stay there for weeks. These are coolies employed in khedda fields; they come in considerably large numbers which vary from 300 to 500 for a company.

Khedda Coolies.

38. Besides the above, in the same season the hill men of certain quarters, particularly of the country lying about the sources of the Goomti and the Fenny, have their homes on the sides of the Surding range, where they stay for months constructing dug-outs for the trades of Noakhally and Tipperah, where such boats are much in demand. These men while thus employ live in considerable numbers in one place, and their situation at the time thus affords them good opportunity to guard the passages through which raiders wishing to invade the country watered by the Goomoti have to pass.

Wood-cutters among hill men.

39. Another class of emigrators are the persons who live along the borders. These people step in to the adjacent British Territory, whenever necessity compels them to take this step; similarly, whenever there is any need for it, i.e., either to evade the pursuit by police or payment of dues, British subjects silently come into the State and become its subjects either for a time or permanently. There is no means by which the number of persons thus going out or coming in may be ascertained.

The borderers.

PRICE OF FOOD AND LABOUR

40. The principal article of food used by the people is rice, which during the year was sold on the average at 17 seers, 6 chittacks, for a rupee. The price in the preceding year ranged much higher, having been 13 seers, 6 chittacks for a rupees on the average; wheat, which is chiefly used by the few up- country men who reside in the state for trading and other purposes, was sold during the last two years at 8 seers, 1 chittack, and 7 seers 13 chittacks, respectively, for a rupee. It is not produced in the State,

Price of food-grains.

the local requirements being met by supplies which the shop-keepers obtain from Dacca.

41. The great bulk of the people do not much depend upon the market for any article other than salt, fish and a few more things of the kinds not obtainable from agriculture. In the market therefore, demand for rice and other principal necessaries of life is small.

No high demand for rice in the market.

The consequence is that when the produce of the land is plentiful, the price goes down, for exportation, though not prohibited, is practically difficult owing to want of means for conveyance.

42. Price of labour is generally high, as labourers have to be brought from outside the State, the natives not requiring to be employed on wages. On the occasion of any emergency, the State compels its subjects to serve as coolies for hire, the rates of which vary from Rs. 7 to Rs. 9 per head per month.

Price of labour high.

43. Persons traveling through the hills on the service of the State can in every village get, free of charge, luggage bearers, who under the custom of the country, carry their things to the next village on the way, when they are relieved by a new set obtained on the spot. Thus the travelers find no difficulty in proceeding on in their journey with their necessary things carried along with them. Such bearers are locally called Tyetheungs.

Tyetheungs.

44. Skilled labour also has to be imported from the adjacent British districts, and as its demand is small, the price ranges generally high. During the year of report it varied thus: blacksmith from Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 per month; carpenter from Rs. 10 to Rs. 12, and syce from Rs. 5 to Rs 6.

Skilled labour.

MANUFACTURES

45. The list of native manufactures is very small. Beyond the preparation of the few articles of clothing which the hill people use, and which they make at home, they know no art, not even any ordinary work in iron, the takhwah or dao, without which they cannot exist, being itself made and sold to them by the Bengali blacksmiths. They are similarly dependent upon the Bengalis for every other thing, such as earthen posts, brass utensils and, articles of silver and brass ornaments which some of them have learnt to wear.

Manufacures few.

46. There is a loom almost in every hill man's house at which a women is always engaged at leisure hours, their men not taking any part in the work. The articles which are generally prepared are :-

Cotton manufacturs.

1st poery - A sort of thick soft carpet of untwisted and unspun cotton, used by the Kukie Chiefs for purposes of bedding. This is manufactured only by the Kukies.

2nd Parcha - A sort of thick board sheet, sometimes coloured, used by the men for covering the body. It is prepared by all classes of hill women, and also by the Manipuris. Coats are often made of this cloth, and worn by men when employed to work in forests.

3rd Rekna - A strong, thick and usually black, piece, two cubit long and a cubit and a quarter broad, worn by the hill women.

4th Rea - A strong piece of different colours, two cubits long and half a cubit broad, used by the young hill women as breast-cloths.

5th Phaniak - A nice piece of wearing apparel of fine texture, and often gracefully coloured and embroidered, worn by the Manipuri women, and prepared by them.

No other manufactures known.

47. Besides the above, there is nothing known to be manufactured in the State. The Manipuris are reported to be experts as smiths,but in this country they all live as cultivators. There are two or three villages inhabited by the Assamese, who formerly used to manufacture in silk, but finding the business unprofitable, they have now almost entirely given it up, and have taken to ploughing.

MINES.

There may be some in the State.

48. In a hilly country like this, it is probable that there may be some mines. The probability gains ground from the fact that on the beds of many hill-streams in the interior, sands of reddish and copper colour can be found in abundance. No discovery however has been made in this direction, and none has been yet attempted by the State.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

No trading class in the state

49. There is no class of people residing in the State, who by profession are traders. The country is poor, and there is no place in it where commerce or trade is carried on largely. On the hills no bazar or other trading place exists in any part, the people dealing with Bengali traders at home or coming down to bazars on the plains for the purpose.

Articales of trade

50. The principal articles of trade for the hill people are :-

Exports - Cotton, til, (oil-seed), and forest produce of various kinds such as bamboos, timber, thatching grass, and dug-outs (Konda boats) and poeries (cotton carpets).

Imports - Salt and earthen pots, and, also chillies, onions, tobacco, molasses, &c.

Value of export trade not small

51. The total value of the export trade cannot be accurately estimated, there being no means for conducting any enquiry for the purpose. But it cannot on the whole be small, as however irregularly and unintelligently the trade may be carried on, it is the only source from which the inhabitants of the hills obtain their money to meet the demands of the state, and to buy the necessary imported articles.

Bazars in the plains.

52. In the plains, as in British Territory, buying and selling is chiefly effected in bazars, of which the principal are those of Agartola, Bisalgar, Koylashar, Sonamura and Udaypore. The number of bazars is gradually increasing, a sign of the growing prosperity of the people. The shop-keepers are every where British subjects who import parched rice (cheera) molasses, sugar, salt, oil, tobacco, cloth, and fancy things. They have nothing to export out of the produce of the plains except occasionally some rice and molasses.

Trade in charcoal.

53. A few of the inhabitants of the plains, mostly of the Chandal class, carry on a trade in charcoal. It is done thus : during the winter these people come upon the hills, and collecting wood and bamboos

burn them and then take down the charcoal for sale in British Territory. Almost all the smithis, washermen, and others of the districts of Tipperah and Noakhally get their supply of charcoal from this source.

Animals sold in the State

54. Among the animals brought into the State for sale and taken out of it, may be mentioned pigs and elephants. The former are imported by Domes, living in the district of Tipperah, and sold to the people of the hills. The latter are caught in kheddas in the State and sold at Kailashar generally in February and March, to the traders of Sylet and other places. The value of elephants thus taken out of the territory aggregate on the average to about a lakh of rupees a year. No portion of this sum, however, is shared by the masses of the natives, as almost all the people employed in the work belong to British Territory. In the sale in March last, the value amounted to Rs. 1.07,000, for 121 elephants.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING ON GENERAL OR SPECIAL SUBJECTS.

Domestic slavery.

55. The Thakurs continue to look with dissatisfaction on any proceeding that may be adopted in accordance to the Maharajah's proclamation preventing domestic slavery. But the Maharajah is as desirous as before to see that his rule on the subject is not treated as a dead letter. During the year of report, no new case of a person being sold or purchased came to notice.

Occupancy rights not allowed to non-resident ryots.

56. There is a rule in the State which disallows to non-resident ryots occupancy rights on lands cultivated by them, but allows such rights to those who reside in the territory. It was framed evidently with the view of the getting into the State resident tenants whose number, particularly along the borders, is now so limited.

Discontent among British subjects in consecuence.

57. During the year, the above mentioned rule was acted upon in certain pargannas in the Sonamura sub-division, where new settlements had to be made, the terms of former engagements having expired. The matter, as might be anticipated, caused much irritation among the ryots (British subjects). Some abandoned their possessions, and a few quitting their homes in British Territory became resident tenants in the State, while others preferred to have two homesteads, one on each side of the boundary. But there are others, again, who are neither willing to leave the British districts nor, without the last struggle, to give up their holdings in the State which have been in their possession for generations. The matter thus stands yet unsettled. I have therefore brought it to the notice of the Maharajah with the view that the rule may be modified.

A case of riot occurred in consequence.

58. The disputes between the men of the Maharajah's Agents and the tenants arising from the above source, led in one instance to a case of riot which was tried at Agartola with results against the latter. Happily there has been no other case of the kind about the matter.

The rule is hard and inexpedient.

59. In point of equity, the rule in question is hard for British subjects, as in point of expediency, it is likely, in the long run, to prove unprofitable for the State. For, tending as it does to prevent the influx of the former, it impedes extension of cultivation in the latter. Thus being one-sided, it contrasts badly with the law in force in British Territory, where, for all cultivators living either within or beyond the borders, the rule is alike.

63. The above list gives the names of officers of the General (Civil) Department. In the Military Branch of the service, too, the number of superior officers is comparatively exceedingly large, for in a body of 212 troops, there are :-

Superior officers too many in Military Department.

One officer - A Thakur, styled as General.

One officer - An up-country man known as Lieutenant, Colonel.

Two officers - Two up-country men, known as Majors.

One officer - An up-country man, known as Captain.

Four officers - Bengalis and Goorkhas known as Subadars, and,

Thirty-four officers- Of the lower ranks.

64. Similarly in the Chakla office of Comillah, the establishment has been increased by the appointment of a second Naib Dewan on Rs. 90 a month, and the pay of the first two native officers, viz the Dewan and the first Naib Dewan, has been considerably raised.

Chakls establishment increased.

65.The General administration of the State rests with the two Ministers and the Naib Dewan who are the principal members of the Sudder office, as well as the civil and the criminal courts being subordinate to it. The general conduct of the Ministers, their character for efficiency and aptitude for work have already been reported in previous years. The Naib Dewan is still a new man in the service, and it is therefore, not yet time to judge of his capabilities as a managing officer. For the present however his situation is only a subordinate one.

The Minister of the State.

66. There being no division of work, or none being observed, no one exactly appreciates the amount of the responsibility which he has. The Bengali officers, naturally enough always wish to avoid taking up any duty which strikes against the interest any one of the Thakurs, while all, without exception, would think over twice before they would venture to duly discharge the functions of their office,when such discharge might offend any one of the relatives or favourites of the Maharajah. And nevertheless the Thakurs, and such relations and favorites, have interests in landed tenures and in farms of forest produce and in other matters all over the country; the administration therefore has not a little to deal with them.

Difficulties of officers.

67. As a natural consequence of above state of things, business is done generally slowly - and sometimes not very equitably - an effect which is attributable in not a small degree to the Maharajah himself. Having the praiseworthy desire for looking into all affairs himself, and perhaps possessing but partial confidence in his Ministers, the Maharajah has kept in his hands the final disposal of not only the important matters, but also of many of those which are comparatively of little consequence. But from his habits and previous training, he is incapable of the exertions required for the due performance of the task.

Business generally goes on slowly.

68. "The State", "as Mr. Bolton reported in 1878, "does not require any elaborate system of Government." The amount of work to be done is not heavy, nor do frequently questions of any intricacy arise for solution. Any energetic and well-conducted officer of good common sense and experience of revenue and criminal

administration would be quite fit for beneficially governing the country, provided he were allowed to act independently. It is highly desirable for the interests of the State that Maharajah should select such an officer, and entrust him with the sole and independent charge of the administration, and hold him responsible for it. No question of cost is involved in the matter, for the rate of pay already allowed may be quite sufficient for the purpose. The selection may experimentally be made from among the officers already in employ; but the best step would be, as Mr. Bolton suggested, to have the services of a good Deputy Collector secured, as from the lien that such an officer might be allowed to hold, on his berth in the service under British Government, he would be better fitted to act with more independence. Whatever improvement has of late been effected in the administration, is all due to the late Dewan Baboo Nil Mani Das who, in consequence of the freedom of action that was granted to him, was able to introduce reforms as fast as circumstances allowed. That the state, so to say, owes to him "a debt immense of endless gratitude" is now acknowledged by all, and by the Maharajah too.

STATISTICAL ENQUIRIES.

69. It is not known that such enquiries have ever been undertaken by the State in any elaborate and systematic way. But every year during the Dusserah time, the head men of hill villages come to Agartola to inform the administration of the number of assessable houses that their villages may then contain, in order that accordingly the revenue to be paid by them for the year may be fixed. On that occasion enquiry is verbally made about their general wants, their joom crops, their health, and such other matters as may throw light on the general subject of their condition, which is required to be known for the purpose of ascertaining whether any alteration in the amount of their previous year's rent would be justifiable.

No such inquiries made in any systemstic way.

70.Except what was made in the above way, no special enquiry was instituted by the State during the year to collect information on statistical points. Under instructions of Government, contained in circular No. 4, the 6th February 1880, the taking of a regular census is now being arranged for. This is the first time in its annals that the State is going to enumerate its subjects in a right and systematic way.

Census to be taken next year.

MODEL FARMS

Nil.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME, AND CIVIL JUSTICE

71. As usual, the amount of crime committed by the hill people was very small. Few cases, either criminal or civil, occurred among them. But it is believed that in many instances information of cases is not received by administration. Isolated, distant, and inconveniently situated as their villages are, the people on many occasions preferdel to amicably settle their disputes. They are naturally loth to litigation, so they seek justice in courts only in rare cases. The civil police in consequence have little to do on the hills, where therefore there is no police station in any part.

Crime little on the hills.

72. In the plains, i.e. within the tract which gird the hills along the British borders, there are two thanas in the Koylashar, three in the Agartola and thirteen in the Udaypore Divisions. These are kept up for the protection of the Bengali and Manipori villages. By far

Police stations on the plains.

the greatest part of this tract lies in the Udaypore sub-division, where the number of thanas is comparatively large. The dutes of the officers in charge of these stations are now threefold, viz first to preserve the peace of the country; second to supervise the collection of forest dues; and third to collect cotton revenue. They have now generally ample work to do. Formerly, their business was but very light, as owing to the small number and unturbulent character of the people, pure police work is little in every station. During the year of review, a new police station was established in the sudder sub-division near Alisaheb on the north of Agartola.

73. In many parts of the plains also, as in the hills, the people live under a great disadvantage, having the seat of the courts of justice at too great a distance from their villages. For this reason, in a considerably large number of cases complaints are not made at all. This want will be greatly removed on the opening of the proposed sub-division at Bilonia, where work is likely to be commenced in the next winter. But as a class the people are not fond of intigation, and do not resort to courts unless compelled by actual necessity.

All cases not complained of.

74. Matters for civil cases are few, as the amount of monetary transactions among the people is limited, and the quantity of arable lands in each individual's holdings is generally too large to induce him to court the possessions of others.

Matters for civil cases few.

ADMINISTRATION OF REVENUE

75. The two great objectionable features in the administration of revenue noticed in preceding reports were, first the system of farming under which collections were made in almost every department; and second the numerous petty taxes. such as the tax on parrots, the tax on spinning wheels, &c. to which the people were subjected. I have now to report that the order passed by the Maharajah for the abolition of the latter, as mentioned in the last year's report has been fully carried out during the year under review, and that the farming system, too, has been abolished in the case of an important source of revenue, viz cotton. But the system of farming the different heads of revenue has been carried to such a great extent, and has been in existence for so long a time; and further, so many influential members of the Maharajah's family are interested in it, that it is not likely that it can be completely done away with in a short time. Nor, in the present state of the administration, should it be expedient to abolish the system altogether. Under Khas management, as a subsequent paragraph will show the cotton mehal has not, during the year of report, produced as good a result as was expected. Direct management requires vigilant and steady supervision, a task which, as reported last year, neither the Maharajah, nor his present head officers are quite capable of performing with due diligence and care.

Its objectionable features.

76. The accompanying revenue statement contains a list of all the different sources from which the State derives its revenue, showing the amount of actual collection made under each head during the past two years. I have added a column, and have entered in it, from figures available in this office, the average amount of receipts for the next preceding three years. But as it is, the return is an imperfect account of the financial position of the State inasmuch as it tells nothing, either about the expenditure or about the actual demand, current or past. It is not customary to call upon the Maharajah's office to furnish information under these heads. But I have heard that in respect to no item was there any considerable change in the demand in the year under review.

The revenue statement.

77. The total collection amounted to Rs. 2,01,106, showing an increase of Rs. 5,972 over the collection of

the previous year, and of Rs. 3,652 over the average of the next preceding three years. The total expenditure of the State, including costs of administration, and the Maharajah's ordinary domestic expenses, amounts on the average to over three lakhs of rupees a year; the State therefore has, every year, to draw upon its zemindaries in the Noakhally, Tipperah and Shlhet to the extent of nearly a lakh of rupees.

Total collection.

LAND REVENUE.

78. With the exception of a small portion which is collected direct from the ryots, the whole of the land revenue is realized through farmers and talukdars, amongst whom are included some the ladies of the Maharajah's family and also Chief Minister.

How collected.

79. Settlement, either of a taluk or of a farm, is generally conducted on the basis of any measurement, or local enquiries previously made for the purpose. But it is usually granted to the highest bidders about the Court, who again sublet their interests, deriving frequently a handsome profit in the bargain.

Settlement how made.

80. The land is fertile, but on account of the comparatively small demand that exists for it, is let out to ryots only from 14 annas to Re. 1-4, a kani a year. The produce of a kani is sufficient for the support of a person for twelve month's. So generally a ryot cultivates as many kanis as there may be members in his family to be maintained.

Prevailing rates in rent.

81. The e total amount of collection of land revenue during the year was Rs. 35,153 against Rs. 33,963 of the preceding year. The increase was due partly to extension of cultivation and partly to enhancement of rates in a few pargannas.

Total land revenue collected.

FAMILY TAX

82. The total demand on account of family tax comes up in round numbers to about Rs. 30.000 a year. But the amount is never fully realized, about 20 per cent. always remaining in arrears. This is owing generally to laxity on the part of the collecting officers, and sometimes to want of means of the people. The best season for the realization of the tax is the spring, when the people have sold off their cotton and til, and got some money in hand. If this opportunity is allowed to slip, great difficulties are met with in making the collection for the year.

Total demand.

83. The entire sum realized during the year of report amounted to Rs. 22,827, showing an increase of Rs, 3,122 over the collection of the preceding year, a result which is chiefly attributable to the abolition of the Jolye system reported last year.

Total collection.

FOREST PRODUCE

84. This is an important source of revenue which is capable of being considerably developed. But like other sources it is let out to farmers (among whom the Chief Minister is one), who again, in many instances, have granted sub-leases to third parties on profits which on the average come up to not less than 25 percent of the amount received by the State. The entire annual demand under this head is over Rs. 40,000. Thus in a single branch of its revenue, the State loses under the farming system not less than Rs. 10,000 a year.

Annual demand.

85. Revenue under this head is collected in two distinct methods, firstly, - from persons who take away the forest produce by land; and secondly - from those, who carry it in boats down the rivers. The latter pay the dues at toll-stations, which are generally situated at places where the rivers pass the limits of the State; while the former pay either through agents of the farmers or direct to the farmers' officers. When payment is made to the officers, it is reckoned at one pice for a bundle of thatching grass, two pice for a bundle of muli bamboos, and two pice for a bundle of canes. The agents are a sort of farmers themselves, who undertake to make collections from one or more villages in British Territory, the inhabitants of which usually come to the hills and export bamboos, &c. They make a previous settlement with the Maharajah's farmers or sub-farmers, as the case may be, engaging to pay so much a year for the village or villages, and make their collections from the inhabitants at from six annas to one rupee a head a year, according as the villages are near or distant from the hills. Taxes on articles taken by water are reckoned generally at from 12 to 20 percent *ad valorem.*

How the collection is made

86. The collection during the year of review shows a decrease Rs. 3,667 being Rs. 35,905 against Rs. 39,572 of the preceding year. Having gathered a good rice crop from their joom, the hill people, naturally indolent and improvident, did not think it worth their while to undertake the labour of cutting and bringing down wood and bamboos in large quantities, as they did in the preceding year. To this cause is chiefly attributable the decrease in question.

Total collection.

FENNY GHAT.

87. The State is in receipt of five-eighths of the net profits derivable from the tolls collected by Government at the Fenny ghat. The settlement was made in consideration of the quantity of forest produce that is usually floated down the river Fenny from the Hill Tipperah side. The term of the settlement expired last year. But the collection is still being made as before under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The amount received by the State during the year under review, was the amount due for the previous year. It was Rs. 5,365 of the year before.

Colletion how made.

COTTON MEHAL

88. Collection under this head for a long series of years used to be made through two joint farmers to whom settlement used to be given for the purpose, for five years at a time. The term of the last settlement expired at the beginning of the year under review, when the farmers refused to enter into fresh engagements on the previous terms, on the ground, as they said, that the crop during the year was an insufficient one. On this, further settlement was not made with them, but the mehal was brought under direct management.

Brought under khas management.

89. As soon as it took the business in its hands, the State, to provide against any possible loss, increased the rates of the cotton tax all round, a step which it was beyond the power of the farmers to adopt. The rates, compared with those prevalent before, stand thus :-

Rates increase.

	Under the farmers		Under khas management		
	As.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Cleaned cotton, per maund	3	0	4	8	0
Bong, i,e, good uncleaned cotton, per maund	1	12	1	14	9
Ordinary cotton (uncleaned); per maund	1	2	1	13	6
Til (oil seeds), per maund	1	0	1	5	3

90. Besides paying the above rates, the traders are subjected on payment of due fees to take out licenses, if they want to come on the hills to buy cotton. The rates of these fees also were increased during the year. Licenses are of two kinds, one for petty dealers, called "Chanaris," who import salt, chillies &c., and sell them for cotton, and the other for regular traders styled "Beparies," who export cotton in large quantities, purchasing it for cash. For the former, a uniform rate of one rupee is charged for a year all over the State, but for the latter, the rates very according to the varying degrees of facility which the country, by its rivers and other means of communication, affords to the traders. During the year under report, the fee or a license for Beparies to trade in -

Licenese fees.

	Rs.	
Agartola was	5	a year.
Bisalgar, Khoyagi, Alinagar	6	,,
Dakhin Bari	10	,,
Alisaheb	15	,,
Sonamura	30	,,
And in other places	2 to 4	,,

It is said that, for the collection of the dues the farmers used to keep an establishment costing over Rs, 20,000 a year, but that the State, which entrusted a good deal of the work to its police, had to maintain a comparatively smaller agency, the cost of which was estimated at Rs. 16.000 per annum.

91. Notwithstanding all the advantages enumerated above, the collection under the khas management amounted to Rs. 48,188 , which minus the establishment charge of Rs. 16,000, shows a decrease of Rs. 7,209 in comparison with the proceding year's income of Rs. 39,397, a result which is hardly creditable to the management. With mathats and abwabs under two or three heads, the farmers under the terms of their last quinquennial settlement used to pay to the State Rs. 50,000 a year. Their gross collection, including cost of establishment and profits, could not therefore, in good seasons, have fallen much short of a lakh of rupees.

Amount of collection.

ROYALTY OF ELEPHANTS CAUGHT

92. There was a decrease under this head of Rs. 5,227 the amount of receipt being Rs. 19,556 against Rs. 24,783 of the preceding year. The falling off is due to the dull state of the market. Altogether three fields were worked during the year, viz those of Ormersagar, Deogung and Manu, the first by Mr. Larmine, and the last two by certain inhabitants of Sylhet. The number of elephants caught was 121, of which 20 died and, 101 were sold. The royalty is calculated for the Omersagar field at one-eighth of the value of every animal sold, the value being reckoned at the fixed rate of Rs. 100 for each foot

The amount of collection.

of the animal's height. For the other two fields it is one-fourth of the actual price for which the animal may be sold in the market.

BUFFALO MEHAL

93. The receipts amounted to Rs. 1,854 against Rs. 2,193 of the previous year, and Rs. 2,208 the average receipt for the next preceding three years. The decrease is owing partly to want of proper attention on the collecting officer, and partly to grazing land being by degrees brought under cultivation.

Receipts.

KHOTAGARI MEHAL

94. This is an unfair impost as already reported in previous years. It is levied in the Udaypore Division on trading boats, and rafts of bamboos collected for sale. The rates, as stated last year, vary from Re. 1 to Rs. 1-8, according as the spot where the boat or the raft may be moored is less or more convenient for trading purposes. The collection during the year fell from Rs. 998 to Rs. 909. It is gradually decreasing owing apparently to unwillingness of the people to pay it. The average receipts for the next preceding three years was Rs. 1,387.

An objectionable tax

CHUNA SHIKHAR MEHAL

95. This is an unfair impost too. It is the price charged on the monopoly granted to certain persons for bringing in and selling at the Agartola Bazar chuna, or lime, eaten by the people with betel; and shikar a sort of burnt earth prepared for women. The objectionable character of this tax has already been reported in previous years. It was expected to be abolished along with numerous other petty taxes of the kind, such as duty on parrots, honey, mustard, garjan, &c., which have already been done away with to the great relief of the people, and to the comparatively but very insignificant loss to the State. The collection during the year amounted to Rs. 76 only.

What it is.

KAZAI MEHAL

96. The small decrease of Rs. 38 under this head does not call for any remark. The collection, as in other departments, is made through farmers who have sub-farmers under them in every part of the territory. On the occasion of marriage amongst Mahomedans, the dues of the State are paid by the bridegrooms at the rate of Rs. 3 for each marriage, plus a small allowance which goes towards the remuneration for Kazi, i.e., the farmer or sub-farmer, as the case may be, who may perform the ceremony as priests.

How the collection is made

RENTS ON MARKETS

97. The difference between the amounts of collection under this head for the last two years is also not remarkable. Rents are collected only on account of the old markets, the newly established ones being not subjected to any payment as long as their stability is not well secured. On their attaining to a sufficient degree of strength they are leased out to the highest bidders, who, asusual in such cases, always prove to be oppressors towards the petty dealers. The Agartola bazar, which is the most important market-place in the whole State, is itself not free from such oppression, and were it not for this, things obtainable in the neighbouring villages in the British Territory, such as fish, vegetables, &c., would

Markets are farmed.

have been imported here more largely than at present.

LAW AND JUSTICE FINES.

98. The amount of receipts under this head during the year of report was less than that of the previous year by Rs. 303, the collections for the two years respectively being Rs. 3,878 and Rs, 4,181. The reduction is due partly to the realization of arrears made in 1878-79, which had considerably swelled the amount of collection for that year, and partly to the falling off in the number of criminal cases as reported in paragraph 115-2. The average receipts under this head for the next preceding three years were only Rs. 3,104.

Decrease in the collection

COURT FEES, INCLUDING STAMP AND PROCESS FEES

99. The revenue under this head is steadily increasing in the last few years . This is owing more to careful collection by the officers than to increased litigation among the people. Court fees are collected in stamps and process fees in cash.

Revenue under this head increasing.

CATTLE POUNDS

100. Cattle pounds are under the supervision of the police, every thana or outpost having a pound attached to it. The collection during the year was Rs. 1,476 against Rs. 1426 of the preceding year.

Supervised by police

ABKARI.

101. Abkari revenue is derived from fees charged on licenses granted to the inhabitants of the plains, first, for preparing liquor for home consumption; second, for preparing it for sale by retail; third, for carrying on extensive trade in excisable articles; and fourth, for importing from British Territory European liquor, ganja, and opium for sale in the State. There is a wholesale company at Agartola consisting of some Thakurs who have taken out licenses under the third and fourth heads enumerated above. Privileges under the first and second heads are usually granted to Tipperahs living in the plains. License-holders are allowed to sub-lease their rights.

How the revenue is derived

102. Three sorts of liquors are usually prepared at Agartola, which are valued according to the degrees of strength they posses. The least strong is the doasta, which is sold from three to five annas a seer; the next above it is the golapi; the ordinary price of which is between six and eight annas a seer; the strongest liquor prepared is termed brandy, which is sold at from twelve annas to one rupee per seer. European liquor is generally imported from Dacca, while ganja and opium are brought from Brahmanbaria on payment of due fees.

Kinds of liquor prepared at Agartala.

103. It appears that in their zeal to increase the Abkari revenue, the officers of the State sometime grant licenses to persons without due consideration. Quite recently, I saw at Radhanagar, less than half a mile from the Chanddagram Moonsifee, in the district of Tipperah, a hut erected by the spirit vendor of Chanddagram, for the purpose of working a still, and selling liquir to the ryots of the State, license for which, I heard, had been granted to him for Rs. 3 a year. Of the few Bengalis living in the State in that side the majority are Mahomedans of the lowest class, among whom use of liquor is extremely limited. Tipperah population in the neighboring hill is also small, and

Licenses sometimes granted without due consideration.

they seldom come down to buy liquor as they prepare it at home. The unavoidable consequence of the action will therefore be, first, illicit exportation to Chunddagram, and second, holding out temptation to the poor people. The license having been taken on a nominal fee the shop-keeper will be able to sell his manufacture at very low rates. I have brought the matter to the notice of the Maharajah for his consideration.

104. The entire Abkari revenue during the year was Rs. 1,299 against Rs, 1,330 of the previous year, and Rs, 1,112 the amount of average receipt for the next preceding three years.

Revenue collected

NAZARS

105. There has been a considerable falling off in Nazaranah owing, it is believed, to there having been fewer cases of settlement of land revenue in the year of report than in the preceding year. Nazaramh is a partial index of the amount of work that the Maharajah discharges personally, for it is customary for every applicant to pay him a nazar when he sees him for the first time as well as when he gets his object fulfilled.

Decrease in collection.

ADDA

106. As reported last year, the Adda is a Chowkidari tax levied evidently for the purpose of maintaining village watchmen. There was however, no such watchman anywhere in the interior of the State ere this, and with the exception of the Koylashar Division, none can be met with in any part even now. The sub-divisional officer of Koylashar, who takes a lively interest in the cause of his subjects, has recently got a few persons employed to keep watch in the Manipuri villages in the Koylashar valley. But in other places it does not appear that any attempt has yet been made in this direction. The remark made on this subject in the Government Resolution on the report submitted last year was duly communicated to the Maharajah. The total revenue from this source was Rs. 1,833 which was less than that of the previous year by Rs. 358, and than average receipt for the next preceding three by Rs. 1.141. It is believed that the object or the tax not being realized, the people are every year growing more unwilling to pay. It is levied at the rate of twelve-annas per house, the widows and orphans being exempted.

Its objects.

GRASS MEHALS

107. As it is done in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Chankholas are now being regularly measured and settled. To this arrangement is due the increase of Rs. 767 collected during the last year. Chankhollas are mostly situated in the Udaypore Division, partcularly along the bank of the Fenny.

They are now regularly measured.

MUNICIPALITY

108. Like the Adda, this tax also is paid relunctantly, and for similar reasons. There is only one municipality in the State, viz, that of Agartola, where arrangements for keeping the town clean, and for maintaining watch are anything but satisfactory. During the last year the collection amounted to Rs. 91 only, against Rs. 380 of the previous year, and Rs. 530 the average of the next preceding three years.

Collection very small.

REGISTRATION

109. This is not a new source of income, though it has now appeared for the first time in the list. Registration

Not a new source. was introduced by the late Dewan, Baboo Nil Mani Das. But the subject was at first indifferently attended to, as every innovation in this country is likely to be. The income from this source was Rs. 3,531 during the year under review.

MISCELLANEOUS.

110. Under this head are included all minor sources of income, viz. the Jail, the Dispensary, the Press, Jalkar, Chilts, &c. The receipts amounted to Rs. 4,995 showing on the whole an increase of Rs 957 over the sum collected in the preceding year, The reason for the increase does not appear , but perhaps the was made up of small increments under several heads, which themselves are not noticeable.

Increase in the collection

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

111. The existing arrangement for the administration of justice is sufficient for the requirements of the State. The people are not, as a class, litigious, nor are the cases which generally occur often of a serious nature. The courts of the first instance do their work pretty well, and are in the enjoyment of the confidence of the people. But the business of the superior, and appellate courts is not always conducted so regularly and promptly. And it is feared that in cases in which the interest of the State, as a party, or that of any superior officer of the administration is concerned, no court can at all times proceed with such independence and self-reliance, as in other cases it generally does.

The courts of justice.

112. There are five courts of justice in Agartola, three original, and two appellate; and there is one court in each of the two sub-divisions of Sonamura and Koylashar, where there are no courts of appeal. Most of the presiding officers are Thakurs and relatives of the Maharajh. In a few instances only they are Bengali Hindus. Formerly there was a special court at Agartola, known as "Hill Court," for the disposal of matters between hill men and hill men. This court has been abolished during the year, having been found to be unnecessary. For on the one hand, the amount of business that was required to be done by it was small, and on the other, the Magistrate and the Moonsif of Agartola, being both of them Thakurs, are quite competent to hear and settle all disputes between the hill people.

Their number.

113. There is no fixed Code of laws for the officers to follow. The laws in force in British Territory form the general basis for their guidance, though not expressly and formally acknowledged. In several instances, however, in which the offenses complained of cannot be easily met by British law known to them, the officers are guided by their own judgment and common sense.

No. code of laws.

114. During the year of review, there has been no change in the personnel of the judicial officers, and with the exception of the abolition of the "Hill Court," and the appointment of an assistant to the sub-divisional officer of Sonamura, no change in the administrative machine whatever.

Personal of efficers same as before.

115. The accompanying judicial statements 1 to 9 show the amount and nature of judicial work, both civil and criminal, done by the several courts of the State during the year of report.

Amount of judicial work done.

(1) - Statement of cases investigated by the police. - Theft of forest produce by British borderers is a most general occurrence in those parts of the State which are adjacent to British districts. The crime, however, is

gradually diminishing owing to the people having agreed to pay to the State duty for the articles they export. The number of theft cases reported last year was 80, against 93 of the year before. Only in 38 of these cases, were the police successful in their investigation. Considerable discretion, however, was shown in the matter of sending up the accused for trial. For out of the 154 persons who were brought up to court, conviction was obtained in the cases of as many as 104, i.e. 67.53 persent.

(2) - Statement of criminal cases compared with the return for the previous year. - The number of institutions of the year under review is less about 9 percent. This is owing, it is believed, partly to the abolition of the "Hill Court", and partly on the one side to the tendency of the court towards ordering dismissal without enquiry, and on the other, as its natural consequence, to the growing disinclination of the people to come up with complaints on the occurrence of every petty dispute. Of the total number of cases for disposal, nearly half were dismissed without enquiry, and of the number tried 26 percent were found false. In about 10 percent of the latter, proceedings were instituted against the complainants. Of the number of persons tried, 329 were convicted in 188 cases, in nine of which the defendants were punished with imprisonment and fine; in 139 with fine only, and in ten whipping was inflicted either in addition to, or in lieu of, other punishments. A few cases only were particularly important. Among them may be mentioned -

1st. - The case of Hasan Ali Sirkar, which originated in connection with the settlement and survey by the farmer of parganna Nabaddip Chundra Nagar. In the year before last it was instituted before the Sonamara court as a case of grievous hurt, but it was transferred during the year of report to Agartola, where it was disposed of by the second Minister as a case of attempt at manslaughter. In September last the case was carried before the appellate court, where it is yet pending. A special report has already been submitted about it.

2nd - The case against Hazi, a British subject, and others, which was pending from the year before last, and which was disposed of during the year of report as a case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder. A special report has been submitted on this case also.

3rd. - The case of theft of gunpowder from the Maharajah's magazine; in which three British subjects were concerned, one of whom was the keeper of the key of the magazine; one a trader of the Agartola bazar who, under license from Government, used to formerly import gunpowder, and small shot for sale to the public who required them for sporting purposes, and one a servant of the latter. All the offenders have been severely punished, as has already been stated in detail in the special report submitted about the case.

(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in criminal cases - The ordinary appelate court is presided over by a Thakur, who is reputed to be a sensible and considerate man. Of the 43 appellants who appeared before him, the appeal of 17 was wholly, and that of 8 was partly, successful. Orders of the lower court were confirmed in reference to 12 persons, and the appeals of only two were rejected. Of the cases of convictions by Magistrates, 21 percent came up in appeal from the Agartola Magistracy; 6.6 percent. from the Udaypore; and 7 percent. from the Koylashar sub divisional courts. The Khas appellate court did very little work during the year.

(4) Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned - The total number of such cases fell from 127 to 75. In eight cases the complainants, in 31 the complainants and defendants, and in 67 the defendants, were British subjects. The entire number of persons brought to trial was 97, of whom 68, or 70

percent were convicted. As before, theft of forest produce was the most general ground of complaint against them.

(5) Statements of cases in which warrants were issued by the Political Agent - In consequence of the gradual decrease in the number of cases about forest produce, the number of applications from the Maharaja's office for issue of warrants under the Extradition Act is by degrees diminishing. Of the 16 persons against whom warrants were issued during the year, five were arrested and made over to the courts of the State, and two surrendered themselves of their own accord. Of these seven , six were convicted, and one remained under trial at the close of the year. Of the remaining nine, one wae brought under arrest in the current year and made over to the State, and another came in willingly and surrendered himself.

(6) Statement of cause in which certificates were issued by the Political Agent under section 9 of the Extradition Act, for trial in British Territory — Only two such cases occurred during the year. The cases were certified for trial, at the sub-divisional court of Brahmunbariah in the district of Tripperah, where they were pending at the close of the year, owing to non-appearance of the complainants. Little interest is taken by the State in the prosecution of cases which are thus certified. And it is believed that, in petty cases the Maharajah's office does not always promptly apply for the arrest of persons who are likely to be found in the State, but that the cases against them are allowed to stand on the file as the last chance for their arrest in the Maharajah's jurisdiction is not over.

(7) and (7a) Statement of civil suits (original) - The civil court is presided over by a Thakur whose power for hearing suits, either in respect to their kinds or in that of their value is not limited. There is a practice obtaining here by which,on the application of claimants, the principal executive officers can issue warrants, locally called chits, for the realization of petty sums not exceeding Rs. 2 in any one instance. These warrants are peremptory, and cannot be objected to before payment of the sum mentioned in them. After payment, however, objections are allowed which are heard and disposed of by the officers issuing the warrants, the civil courts having no concern with them. Statement (7a) gives in detail a comparative account of the number and value of the chits and regular suits for the year of review. Of the 249 regular suits, three only were above the value of Rs. 500 each; the rest were for smaller sums aggregating in all, including the three of higher value, to Rs. 13,292, on which stamp and other fees were realized to the amount of Rs. 1,904-11, i,e Rs. 14-5 percent. on the value of suits. The suits were of the following descriptions :- 119 bond suits; 21 rent suits; 31 possessory suits; 14 suits for goods sold; 12 for damages, and 47 for other claims. Of the number disposed of during the year, 28.63 percent. only were contented, the rest being rejected, compromised, dismissed, or decreed ex parte. In the contested cases judgement was given in favour of the defendants in cases out of almost every five.

(8) Statement of appeals in civil suits - Of 38 cases, 25 were disposed of during the year, 11 in favour of the appellants, and 13 in that of the respondents, and one was remanded. The number of appeals before the khas appellate court was only 13, six pending from the preceding year, and seven new institutions. Of this number only four were disposed of during the year of report, two being rejected and two decided in favour of the appellants. This court is presided over by the Jubraj, the heir elect of the State.

(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subjects were concerned - The number of such suits has been larger this year than in the year before. Thus suits in which British subjects were complainants were 55 against 38; those in which they were both complainants and defendants were 15 against one; and those in which they

were defendants were nine against seven of the previous year. Suits against British subjects would largely increase in number if the decrees of the Maharajah's courts were allowed to be executed in British Territory. This point, however, seems still to be out of the question, as the courts do not appear to have yet attained to a sufficient degree of efficiency. As the things stand at present, natives of the State in their dealings with British subjects try as far as possible to have all their bonds and other principal documents executed in British Territory in order that all future disputes regarding the transactions may be settled in British courts under the Civil Procedure Code. As a rule, the money-lenders of Agartola go to the nearest boundary post in the field, and there get the necessary bonds signed by their debtors.

JAILS

116. The total number of prisoners in jail at the close of the year was 54, 52 men and two women, against 88 of the previous year. Criminal cases occurring in the State are not numerous, and among them only a few are serious. Hance the jail population is always limited in number. The prisoners are sufficiently well accommodated and dieted, and when sick, duly attended to. But then discipline is not all that could be wished.

Number of prisoners.

117. The prisoners are mostly employed as coolies in repairing houses, clearing jungle, making roads, and in works of similar character. Their service is available for the public only on rare occasions as work in connection with the Rajbari is always more than they can finish. The Magistrates of the State have power to exempt prisoners from hard labour if a sufficient return is paid by them in cash. By this rule much of the jail labour is lost to the State and to the public, as prisoners who can afford to do it are always but too glad to purchase their freedom in this respect.

How they are employed.

MILITARY FORCE AND FRONTIER MATTERS

118. Numerically the strength of the force has been increased from 239 to 259 , but the troops are now, as they were before, generally wanting in discipline and efficiency. It is feared that about half their number would find it difficult to stand in the field if required to do so for active service.

Strength of the force.

But they are now better clothed, better armed and more regularly paid than before. And if it were not for their principal officers, who are Court favourites and who can or will bestow but little attention towards them, their fitness for active work and their general usefulness might be much improved. They might be better drilled, better trained, and altogether got up in a better style. Soldiers, like school boys , require careful watching and unfeigned affection from their masters.

119. As to the race of the troops- in every hundred, thirty two are Bengali-Mahomedans, 26 Goorkhas, and 23 Hindustanis, the remaining 19 being Tipperahs, Manipuris, Assamese, and a few Christains; the last are selected from an old Portuguese settlement close to Agartola. The number of Goorkhas has increased from 54 to 68, i.e., by 14, of whom ten were recruited in Behar and four came in of themselves in quest of employment and were engaged. Excepting some of those who are already in service, there are no other resident Goorkhas in the State.

Their race.

120. The supply of arms and ammunition is sufficent. It is procured from Calcutta on licenses obtained from Government. The sepoys are armed with guns and the officers with swords. No fire-arm or sword is

Arms and ammunition.

manufactured in the State, nor any ammunition. Bullets only are prepared when required, but the lead is obtained from Calcutta under license.

121. During the year the frontiers were sufficiently quiet, and, excepting the few cases of groundless excitement which occurred in last winter among certain people in the Koylashar Division, tranquillity prevailed all round the year throughout the State. I saw all the military guard-posts, viz. those of Dharmanagar, Koylashar or Chirakuti, and Kamalpur in the Koylashar Division, and of Udaypore and Eksuri in the Udaypore Division. They were found to be in good order and garrisoned according to requirements. In each of the former three there is a stockade, but the latter two are unfortified. The post at Eksuri, as has already been specially reported, might be removed higher up the Gumati, in order that it could open communication with the most advanced post of the Chittagang Hill Tracts - an object which in the interest both of that country and of this State it is desirable to secure.

Fronter quiet during the year.

122. In the Koylasar Division during the raiding season, some secret guard-posts are kept up by the native Kukies on the eastern side of the Unakuti range for the purpose of observing the approach of enemies, if any would come, and for supplying timely information on the subject to their villages. The Maharajah's people depend in not a small degree on these men for information about the movements of the Lushais. There is no house in any of these posts, but the men are said to keep watch day and might under a tree and some such shelter. Four persons remain at one place at a time, and they are relieved every week by their fellow villagers, who take up the duty by turns. Each set carry with them the necessary supply of provisions for seven days. The work is more or less a self-imposed one, but the State now pays Rs 10 per month on account of each post. These posts are locally called Chaur chowkies - chaur meaning a thief, and chowki a station; the whole word meaning a place which, like that of thieves, is secret and unknown. No such post exisis either in the Udaypore or in the Agartola Divisions, but it is said that passengers requiring to be looked to towards the Udaypore side are guarded during the winter by the wood-cutters who work in that season on the sides of the Surding range, and that towards the Agartola side there is no pathway which the Lushais could follow, the country being full of impassable forests and marshes.

Chaur chowkies.

STATE OF COMMUNICATION

123. The state of communications is unsatisfactory, and no improvement has been effected in this direction during the year. In matters like this, as in almost everything else, a great deal depends upon the execetive heads of the administration. The Maharajah is not unwilling to provide for the convenience of his subjects. Three years ago he sanctioned expenditure of Rs. 2.000 for a road from Agartola to the boundary towards Kasba; but the work is yet unaccomplished owing, it is said, to difficulties in procuring labour.

State of communications not good.

124. There are no roads on the hills. The pathways leadings from one village to another are so narrow and so overgrown with jungle, that the hill people even cannot always pass through them without difficulty. The roads in Agartola, as reported last year, are few and unmetalled. There is no good road in any part of the plains.

No Roads on the hills

EDUCATION

125. The Jubraj is now a grown-up young man; he is intelligent and amiable, but unfortunately for the State, has not been able to acquire sufficient education. His younger brothers, including the Bara Thakuk, are under

Education of the princes.

the tution of an undergraduate of the Calcutta University, who is reported to be doing his duties well. The Jubraj was to have visited Comillah during the last winter, but in consequence of financial difficulties, the journey was postponed for the ensuing rainy season; and now as the State has been involved into an expensive litigation with Kumar Nabaddip Chandra Thakur, the matter is nearly out of the question.

126. Of the schools for public instruction the number in existence at the close of the year was 28, with 668 pupils, against 25 with 700 pupils of the previous year. Thus there was an increase of three schools with a decrease of 32 scholars.

Schools for public instruction

127. The most important school in the State is that of Agartola, which is divided into four sections for the instruction separately of English, Bengali, Sanskrit and Persian. The condition of the school has been somewhat improved since last year. The next important institution is that of Koilashar, in which the sub-divisional officer takes considerable interest, and in which therefore work is done regularly and with care. The Bisalgar school is also doing pretty well in its way, but the rest of the institutions are more or less irregular and of a temporary character.

Which of them are important

128. None of the superior officers of the State head-quarters seem to pay as much attention to the department of education as desirable. Many of the schoolmasters remain in arrears of pay for months, and as a necessary consequence, they feel themselves but partially interested in the task entrusted to them.

Superior State officers not much intersted in them

DISPENSARIES.

129. The number of dispensaries is the same as before, being one in each of the three head-quarters of the three administrative Divisions of the State. The sphere of usefulness of the Agartola dispensary is pretty large. This institution only is under the supervision of the State Surgeon, a medical graduate of the Calcutta University. The dispensaries of Udaypore and Koylashar are under the charge of men of the compounder class.

Number of dispenasries

130. Compared with the statement for the preceding year, the return of patients annexed to this report shows on the whole an increase of 1,180 persons treated, viz 704 for Agartola, 100 for Udaypore and 376 for Koylashar. This is attributable rather to the increased popularity of the institutions than to any increase of sickness among the people. Of the diseases treated, the most prevalent were fever, dysentery, and diarrhoea. In Kohlashar there was a good number of cholera cases, which were successfuly treated by a native doctor temporarily employed for the purpose. Of the 16 in-patients of the Agartola hospital, five were cured and 11 died; eight of cholera, two of fever, and one of fracture. In this hospital 85 surgical operations were perfomed during the year, and 231 persons vaccinated.

Patients treated.

131. The Maharajah's medical establishment at head-quarters is as large as establishments in other departments. It is composed of one State Surgeon, as said above, on Rs. 400 a month; a homeopathic doctor (a native) on similar pay; four native doctors drawing from Rs. 35 to Rs. 60 each, and a lot of native kabirajes and hakims; but in the sub-divisions the establishment is poor, consisting, as said before, of only a single compounder. A good native dictor is wanted at each of the sub-divisional head-quarters for the treatment as well of the patients who may be in the local jails, as of others. Some time ago I pointed out this necessity to the Durbar, and it in understood that the want will be soon supplied.

Medical establishment.

COMMITTEES

132. There is now no regular committee of management in any branch of the administration. The educational and municipal committees exist merely in name; while in connection with dispensaries and other public institutions, the people have not as yet been given any share in the management of business. In a State like this no consultative or executive or body can easily be formed for the due performance of any work of public utility, there being hardly any class of men who, form their character and general qualification, may be usefully employed as members of a governing body. As a matter of course therefore every department is directly managed by its own head in the service.

None in existence.

POST OFFICE

133. There is no postal arrangement by which communications can be carried on between places lying in the interior of the territory. In urgent cases the State engages special runners for carrying its messages; but in ordinary matters communications with such places as Sonamura, Koylashar, and other stations close to the borders, are made through Government post offices. The Agartola post office is supported by the Maharajah, but is worked under the rules of the Government Postal Department by which it is supervised.

None in the interior.

MISCELLANEOUS

134. The budget system introduced into the administration of the State since a few years has not as yet been, nor is it expected ever to be, quite successful in attaining its objects, inasmuch as it cannot act as a cheek on the expenditure of the Maharajah and his household. In other cases, however, its action is generally as wholesome as it should be. The preparation of the budget for the present year has not yet been commenced, because, it is understood, the Chakla officers of Comillah, on whom the work usually devolves, are engaged in connection with the civil suit instituted by Kumar Nabaddip Chandra Thakur.

The budget.

135. During the Year the unexplored portion of the State lying to the east of Agartola about 20 miles from it was surveyed by Major Badgeley, who came in for the purpose in the last cold season.

Major Badgeley's survey.

CONCLUSION

136 From the preceding paragraphs it will be seen that the general administration of the State, unsatisfactory though it may be at present, is in the way to progress. In the heads of the Government there is enough of will to introduce reforms, but not sufficient power. In the management of the treasury, as well as in the condition of the superior judicial courts, and the head executive office, improvement is especially required. Complaint about delay in the discharge of business at Agartola is most general. It has been known that criminal and civil cases in the superior courts are often allowed to remain pending for incredibly long periods. On this subject I have on several occasions communicated with the Maharajah with the view of effecting some reform.

General remarks

137. The State was involved in debts beforehand, and in the year under review additional liabilities were incurred to the extent of over Rs. 20,000 in consequence, it is believed, of the civil suit instituted at Comillah by Kumar Nabaddip Chandra Thakur.

The State is involved

138. At head-quarters the principal officers have to look to the management as well of the Maharajah's household and domestic affairs as of the State - an arrangement which acts as a fruitful source of trouble and anxiety to them, and of mischief to the general administration; for in many instances it not only does not allow them to pay due attention to the business of the State, but positively prevents them from paying any attention at all. The sub-divisional officers are free in this respect, and they can therefore discharge the duties of their offices more promptly and regularly.

Difficulties experienced by the officers at Agartala.

139. The management of the Maharaj's zemindaree chiefly rests with the principal native officers of the Chakla office of Comillah; but in matters of importance reference is always made to the Sudder offices of Agartola to which they are subordinate. Their work during the year was performed with more diligence than before. Collection was effected tolerably well, and the business of the Chagalnaya settlement was continued to be done smoothly and fairly, though rather slowly.

Mararajah's zemindares.

140. As mentioned before, during the year of report the head-clerk of the Agency office was transferred to the service of the State. His successor, Baboo Gobind Chandra Das, has been found to be a well conducted and trustworthy officer.

Character of officer

Statement showing the amount of Revenue derived from all sources in 1879-80

Serial. Nomber	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average recepts for the threeyears 1875-76 1876-77 and 1877-78.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1878-79	Receipts in whole rupees in 1879-80	AS COMPARED WITH 1878-79		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1	Land revenue from plain lands	32,849	33,963	35,153	1,190	.....	
2.	Family tax in the hills	23,460	19,765	22,827	3,122	.....	
3.	Tax on forest produce	31,563	39,572	35,905	....	3,667	
4.	Do. on on the Fenny	7,697	5,365	5,367	2	....	
5.	Tax on cotton and oil-seeds	49,715	39,397	48,188	8,791	....	
6.	Royality on elephants caught	26,853	21,783	19,556	....	5,227	
7.	Baffalo-grazing mehal	2,208	2,193	1,854	....	339	
8.	Khotagari mehal	1,387	998	909	....	89	
9.	Chuna Sikar mehal	80	63	76	13	.....	
10.	Kazai (or kaisfee) mehal	286	253	215	....	38	
11.	Rents of markets	613	722	681	....	41	
12.	Law and justice fines	3,104	4,181	3,878	....	303	
13.	Ditto Ditto Stamp and court fee	6,131	7,035	7,809	774	....	
14.	Ditto Ditto process fee	785	818	986	168	....	
15.	Ditto Ditto Cattle pounds	1,085	1,426	1,476	50	....	
16.	Ditto Ditto abkari (excise)	1,112	1,330	1,299	.....	31	
17.	Nazars	2,063	4,495	1,501	.....	2,994	
18.	Adda (chowkidar tax) mehal	2,974	2,191	1,833	....	358	
19.	Chaukholla (thatching grass) mehal	1,590	2,206	2,973	767	.....	
20.	Municipal tax	530	380	91	....	289	
21.	Registration	....	.....	3,534	3,534	....	
22.	Miscellanous	1,069	4,058	4,995	937	.....	
	Total	1,97,454	1,95,134	2,01,106	19,348	13,376	Increase on the whole = Rs. 5,972

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR 1880-81

No. 1133, dated Comillah, the 30th June 1881.
From - G. Toynbee, esq, Offg. Magistrate of Tipperah,
To - the commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

I Have the honour to forward herewith the annual report of the Hill Tipperah Political Agency, prepared by the Assistant Political Agent.

2. I visited Agurtollah in March last and stayed there 16 days. As it was my first visit, I occupied myself chiefly in acquiring information concerning the past affairs and history of the state. I had two interviews with the Maharaja, and settled with him the question of compensation for the Agurtollah and Brahmanbareah roads, which had been long pending.

3. I also took the opportunity of asking him to push on the construction of such part of the Agurtollah road (from Kashba to Agurtollah) as passes through Hill Tipperah. This work has not made any satisfactory progress, and if vigorous measures be not taken next working season the road now under construction by the Road Cess Department (the earth work of which is hardly completed) will practically end not at Agurtollah, but at the boundary between Hill Tipperah and British territory.

4. The law-suit in which the state became involved owing to the claim brought by Nobodip Chandra Deb Barman has involved the state in considerable financial difficulties, and these have been added to by the unusual difficulty of collecting rents in the Maharajah's estates in British territory owing to the low price of rice which has prevailed throughout the year.

5. The impression which my first visit made on my mind as regards the general administration of the state was not a hopeful one. The Maharajah appears to grow year by year more disinclined for work. The Assistant Political Agent does his best, but his task is a very uphill one. From what I have seen of him I think he is well fitted for the post, but that his energy and abilities are somewhat thrown away on it.

No. 199, dated Agurtollah, the 25th June 1881.
From - BABOO UMAKANTA DAS, Assistant.Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,
To - The magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah.

I have the honour to submit the annual report on the administration of the Political Agency of Hill Tipperah for the year 1880-81.

2. The year, like that which preceded it, was an uneventful one. For many years past no occurrence of any political importance has taken place in the state. The civil suit instituted by Coomar Nobodip Chandra, as mentioned in last annual report, was disposed of in January last. The Coomar got a decree for maintenance at the rate of Rs.. 600 a month, but was unsuccessful about his claim to the succession to the Raj. During the year the Maharajah got a monument, a math, erected on the funeral ground of his mother. The ceremony of consecrating the monument according to the Hindu Shastras took place a few days ago, when as an act of grace the Maharajah released from his jail five prisoners, two of whom had been sentenced for life, and the other three to various terms of long imprisonment.

The year an uneventful one.

ANNUAL TOURS.

3. The Commissioner visited the state in the month of December last and your visit, extending over a period

of more than a fortnight, took place in March. I was in my post throughout the year, and spent 75 days of it in the interior inspecting frontier posts, police-stations, fouzdari and revenue offices, as well as jails, schools, dispensaries, and other public institutions. I visited also several hill villages and explained to the inhabitants the object of the census which was taken in February last. Whilst on this subject, I beg to mention for your notice that for the first time in the history of the administration of the state the chief executive officer of the country has been out on a tour of inspection. In last cold weather the Nazir Shaheb, who is the prime minister to the Maharajah, traveled for about a month in the Udoypore Division of the state and saw a good deal of the country. Were it not for his being in the midst of the Reangs at the census time, the enumeration of that class of the people would have hardly been completed with facility, as they were at first very unwilling to be counted. The sub-divisional officer of Kailashar was also out for a good length of time in his jurisdiction. The state is gradually more appreciating the advantages derivable from inspectional tours.

THE WEATHER AND CROPS.

4. There was slight decrease of .99 in the quantity of the rainfall of the year compared with that of the year next preceding it. The total falls during the two years from April to March were as follow :

	Years	
Months.	1879-80	1880-81
April	1.30	1.70
May	11.20	14.88
June	10.92	17.78
July	14.66	12.59
August	11.85	11.33
September	14.69	13.74
October	7.98	7.81
November	...	...
December	0.64	...
January	0.55	...
February	2.56	...
March	11.60	7.13
Total	87.95	86.96

5. The fall from May to September did good to the joom crops, which are grown on the slopes of low hills. The paddy grown on the sides of riveres and on the higher portions of the plains was also benefited by it, while the complete dryness of the cold months helped the cultivators in reaping their harvests with ease. Cotton and rice, which are the principal crops of the state, were produced in abundance. Oil-seeds, tobacco, chilies, and sugarcane, were about the average.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

6. The general health of the people throughout the year was good. Cutaneous diseases are the most prevalent diseases in the state. From them the people were not entirely free, but they were generally of a slight character. There was no outbreak either of cholera or small-pox, nor did fever break out in the form of an epidemic in

any part of the country, Mortality therefore was small.

7. Generally speaking, the year was one of plenty, as it was one of good health. So the condition of the people, who from their habits and nature have but a few wants, was all that they wished for. Indeed, in consequence of the full harvests which the people have reaped continuously for the last three years, their condition has been much improved.

The people of the plains know no borrowing, while the indebtedness of the hill-folks, who are generally under obligations to Bengali mahajans, has been lessened.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE

8. The hill-people are almost half nomads, who change their abodes whenever they are required to change the sites of their jooms. For this reason, more or less, movements take place among them every year. These movements are generally confined within the state, and are effected without the knowledge and permission of the officers entrusted with the administration of the country. Excepting such as occurred in this way, no other movement worth notice took place among the resident population of the state during the year. The inhabitants of the plains, like the Bengalis of the neighboring districts, are fixed and permanent residents of their villages. Any movement amount them is out of the question.

PRICES OF FOOD AND LABOUR

9. The following is an average account of the prices which prevailed during the year in expect to the principal articles of food and to labour :

Name of articles.	Price per maund		
	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice (best sort)	2	8	0
Ditto (common sort)	1	8	0
Wheat	4	8	0
Gram	4	8	0
Salt	5	0	0

Description of labour	Rate per month
Skilled	
Silversmith	from Rs. 10 to Rs. 15.
Blacksmith	Rs. 12.
Carpenter	from Rs. 10 to Rs. 12.
Ordinary labour	
Day-labourer	4 annas per diem.

10. Of the food-grains mentioned above, rice is produced in the country; the rest are imported from Dacca. Wheat is chiefly used by the up-country men in the Maharajah's service.

11. As to labour, a small portion of the ordinary labour only is local. The rest of it, with the whole of the skilled labour, is imported; the former from Noakholly and Tipperah, and the latter from Tipperah and Dacca.

MANUFACTURES.

12. Under this head I have nothing to say in addition to what was said last year. The people are essentially agriculturists, who, for every article of manufacture required for domestic or other purposes, have to depend entirely upon the Bengal tradesmen. The ploughman must get his plough from the Bengali carpenter; the joom-cultivator must get his knife from the Bengali smith; and, in short, every one of the state must get nearly his every thing from the Bengali traders. The list of native manufactures, as reported last year, is a very short and unimportant one, as, besides a few articles of cotton-pieces, such as poeris, parches, reas, renkas, &c., required for the use of hill-women, it has nothing more to show.

MINES

13. An attempt was made this year to find out any mine that may exist in the state and, if found, to work it out. Signs of the existence of some coal-mines were observed in the Kailashar Division; but owing to the ill-conduct of the person employed to supervise the business the attempt has proved a failure, and has accordingly been given up. Coal-mines, it is generally believed, may be found in several parts of the state; but the expenses of working them are so heavy, and the difficulties and cost of carrying coals to places of demand or trade so great, that the idea of making any profit out of the mines is looked upon, and not unreasonably I should think, as hopeless.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

14. Among the trades carried on in the state, the principal are those relating to elephants, cotton, oil-seeds, timber, and dug-outs. Elephants are caught in the hills and sold to tradesmen of Sylhet and other districts. Cotton and oil-seeds are produced in the hill-jooms, and are exported by merchants and traders of different places. Dug-outs are constructed on the hills near the sources of the rivers Goomtee and Fenny, by which they are floated down to be sold to the people of the districts of Tipperah, Noakholly, and Chittagong, where they are mostly in use. Timber, as well as other forest produce, such as bamboos, thatching-grass, canes, &c. are cut in the hills, and are taken by land and water for sale in British territory. Among the other articles of export may be mentioned charcoal, mats, and occasionally rice. The total value of export trade cannot be correctly estimated; but it must be considerably large, as the amounts of duty on forest produce and cotton levied at about 30 and 40 percent ad valorem were respectively Rs. 40,787 and Rs. 94,291, which would give Rs. 4,718 as the value of the trade in these two items only.

15. Among the articles of import are salt, cloth, tobacco, molasses, vegetables, dried fish, and fancy things, and also European liquor, ganja, and opium, all of which are brought from the adjacent British districts. Importation is increasing in regard to all these articles, particularly in regard to cloth and fancy things, which are slowly finding their way into the interior of the hills.

16. If the state of trade in a country is an index to the condition of its people, the subjects of the Maharajah are no doubt gradually coming to the way to advancement. The existing bazars are gradually being more largely attended, and one or two new bazars are slowly springing up in parts in which formerly not a single tradesman's shop could be seen. This, however, is more a result of the progress of time than an effect of

improvement in the system of administration carried on in the state.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING ON GENERAL OR SPECIAL SUBJECTS.

17. There is nothing of any interest to be mentioned under this head. The people, with all their ignorance and want of civilization, have considerable respect for the ruling authority, and accommodate themselves, generally with good will, to every thing which has the approval and sanction of that authority. The census of February last was in many respects a novelty in the country, and in the beginning was apprehended by the executive of the state to be productive of disastrous effects. It was supposed that the people, who are notoriously averse to anything new being introduced among them, would rise up en masse when the enumerators would enter their villages; but happily the fact proved otherwise, for when the people heard that the matter was one in which the Maharajah had given his consent they never raised a voice against it, nor questioned its object. So the work of enumeration was done more easily and smoothly than was expected before.

18. About the close of the year under report some of the influential Thakurs of Agurtollah, including the chief minister of the state made with the knowledge and permission of the Maharajah, a movement for raising their position as Hindus. This caused some excitement among the orthodox portion of the Hindu subjects in the adjacent parts of the Maharajah's zemindaries, who viewed the movement with disfavour, fearing that it might lead to derogate their status, which they hold to be superior to that of the movers. There was no agitation on the subject among the resident population of the state.

EFFECT OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES AND ARRANGEMENTS.

19. No material change occurred during the year in the arrangement of the administration of the state. The officers in every department were the same as before, and consequently work was done in general in the same style as reported in previous years. Delay and irregularity in the discharge of business, as well as want of a proper sense of one's own responsibility, were observable in almost every branch of the establishments, especially in the superior branch owing, it is believed, partly to the joint authority of the two ministers, but mainly to the want of sufficient attention to work on the part of the Chief himself.

20. The above might be gathered from the following, which is only a single instance out of many of the kind that be mentioned. Of the three divisions of the state, the division of Udoypore is financially the most important. The head of this division, a Thakur of Agurtollah, and a capable officer, came away from his post during the last Dussreah vacation, that is, about the month of September last, and never went back to rejoin his office until the day before yesterday. All this while he was allowed to stay at home and to discharge from there such business of his division as might come to him from his office at Sonamura, which is situated at a distance of nearly two days journey from Agurtollah. While leaving his division, he kept charge with a subordinate officer, whose appointment was originally made the year before last for the purpose of opening a new sub-division at Belonia, which was determined upon early in 1878, but about which no further action has yet been taken, notwithstanding that its necessity is daily growing.

21. About the close of the year I had an interview with the Maharajah on matters regarding the administration of the above said division of the state. From what I heard at the time, and afterwards, I believe that things will be mended ere long. It is said that the proposed Belonia office will be soon opened, and that for the better administration of the hills in the interior and additional office will be established at Udoypore and placed in

charge of a Sub-Deputy magistrate at a total expense of Rs. 100 a month.

22. It appears to me, however, to be highly desirable that, as reported last year, the administration of the country should have at its head a strong-minded, intelligent officer of energy, experience and integrity, who should possess sufficient liberty of action. Without such a head, it is almost hopeless to see the introduction of any material reform in the affairs of the state. A successful Deputy Collector, who is capable to hold charge of a sub-division, might, if vested with sufficient powers, conduct the administration of the Maharajah's dominions easily and properly.

STATISTICAL ENQUIRIES

23. No detailed statistical enquiries have ever been made in the country. A good opportunity for making such enquiries was afforded by the last census, but the executive of the state failed to make sufficient use of it. They at first objected to the census itself, alleging that it was impossible; and when after much negotiation they consented to take it, they consented only on the understanding that it should be a very simple one. A good deal of useful information regarding the country and the people could have been collected by the enumerators, but want of will, proceeding chiefly from want of power, prevented the officers from taking any steps in the direction. According to the census the population of the country is 95,637, i. e. 51,458 males and 44,179 females, against 91,759 the number estimated formerly.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME, AND CIVIL JUSTICE

24. The officers and men employed in the police-stations in the state are, as regards their general qualifications, nearly on a par with employees of similar classes in the police stations in the adjacent British districts. Their pay, however, is distributed most irregularly, being suffered to fall in arrears sometimes to the extent of five or six months. But not withstanding this they appear to be satisfied with their positions, which, unlike similar positions in British districts, are from want of any system of supervision, considered to be free from risks, but like them are viewed as almost equally respectable.

25. The numerical strength of police is quite sufficient for the maintenance of peace in the country. There are altogether twenty-four stations and outposts, of which eighteen are in the Udoypore division, three in Agurtollah, and three in Kailashar. Work is done in these stations, as indeed in every office of general administration, in a way similar to that which is followed in offices of like nature in British territory.

26. In the detection of offenders absconding from British districts and taking shelter in the hills, the police have hitherto been unable to do much. No doubt they have peculiar difficulties to meet with in this respect, as the country, by its position and character, affords numerous facilities to absconders for hiding themselves; but I feel sure that with more earnestness and vigour better results may be produced. In the interests of justice it is desirable that the state should not be suffered to become a refuge for runaway criminals. In the year under review sixteen offenders were reported to have come into the hills for shelter, against whom warrants and summonses were duly issued, but not with any success, as, except in the case of a summons, none of the processes could be executed or served. In addition to these persons, fourteen released convicts of Noakhaly and Tipperah were reported to have crossed the border and settled in the state during the year.

27. There is no regular system of village police in the Maharajah's dominion. Chowkidars, as a rule, are employed only in the head-quarters stations, and not in the interior, where crime and other occurrences are

required to be reported by the village headman. In the Kailashar division, however, an attempt is being successfully made by the sub-divisional officer towards the establishment of a system of village watch in the plains. In the present state of things at Agurtollah a sub-divisional officer, if willing and able, can introduce reforms in his jurisdiction almost independently of the head-quarters officers, whose capacity is limited.

28. The amount of crime committed in the state is, as a rule, always small . In the interior of the hills it is almost nil. Offences are generally committed along the borders, chiefly by the Bengalis. It is along the borders, therefore, that the police-stations are situated. In the year under report not more than seven cases on the average were reported in each station. These cases were chiefly offences against property, and they were generally of a trivial character. Amongst the offences committed were three cases of murder, details of which will be given below. A fourth case of the same offence occurred since the close of the year. Such cases were not so frequent formerly.

29. The administration of civil justice is carried on in the sub-divisions by the sub-divisional officers, and at Agurtollah by a separate officer of the thakur family, who holds the title of Moonsif. Business is everywhere small, but it is done in accordance to rules and formalities similar to those that are prescribed by the Civil Procedure Code in force in British territory.

ADMINISTRATION OF REVENUE

30. The administration of revenue principally rests with the Chief Minister, whose duty is also to supervise the household expenditure of the Rajbary, a work which takes up a great portion of his time. The income of the state is slowly increasing. The total amount of collection during the year was Rs. 2,32,677 against Rs. 2,01,106 of the previous year, and Rs. 1,92,371 the average of the next preceding three years. The increase is mainly owing to increase in cotton revenue, which resulted from more abundant produce of the crop,, and from increase in the rates of duty.

31. In the year under review the collection made in the Maharajah's estates in British territory was also good. The realization in these estates would have been still better if the ryots could have disposed of the surplus produce of their lands. Owing to want of demand from outside, the rice produced in the Maharajah's zemindaries, did not find good sale. It is reported that in pergunnah Dakhinshik, where the crop was most plentiful, a maund of rice fetehed in only about twelve annas on the average. The ryots, therefore, failed to collect sufficient cash, and were consequently unable to pay their rents in full.

32. But on account of the expenses of the lawsuit with Coomar Nobodip Chandra, and the general increase of liabilities almost in every branch of the administration, the state was little benefited by the good collection of the year. The amount of debt, which had already been heavy, was increased. The officers as well as the merchants and traders from whom the Rajabary receives its supplies were always more or less in arrears, and thus the difficulties of the State to make the two ends meet continued as great as ever.

33. The accompanying revenue statement shows the names of the various sources of income and the amounts of collections made from each. It does not fully exhibit the financial position of the country, for it gives no account either of demands or of expenses. The Maharajah is not requested for information on these points, and his office does not usually furnish explanation of the causes of increase or decrease in collections. As before, the most important sources of income were (1) the lands under plough cultivation, (2) the jooming families in the hills, (3) the forest produce, (4) cotton and oil-seeds, (5) the elephant-hunting fleds, and (6) the

stamps and court fees.

Land revenue from lands in the plains.

34. The revenue under this haed has not undergone any considerable change. The collection of land revenue in the Udoypore division is made at the sub-divisional office at sonamura. This causes much inconvenience to the people, particularly to the cultivating classes, who have to come there for the purpose from very long distances. I have brought the matter to the notice to the Maharajah, and I am informed that steps will be taken with a view to remove the inconvenience. In this division, for the purpose of meeting the expenses of improving the town of Sonamura, the sub-divisional officer realizes from every ryot holding khas lands a tax under the name of road-cess, and another under the name of public works cess, each at the rate of six pies on every rupee of sudder jumma. These cesses are being regularly realized since the last two or three years, but it seems that they are not only unauthorised, but were unknown to the Maharajah and to his principal sudder officers before I spoke to them on them on the subject in March last. Besides these, the ryots of this division have to pay a third tax, called the ani, which is collected at the rate of one anna per rupee of the jumma; and a fourth cess, called the uttarayan, which is realized at the rate of six pies per rupee. The total amount of these taxes thus comes up to 2 annas and 6 pies on every rupee of the jumma. The ani is said to be a compensation for the loss which was sustained on the introduction of the Company's rupees (now Empress' rupees) in the place of the old sicca rupees. If so, it would be proper to include it under the head of ordinary revenue, and not to realize it as a cess.

Famlly tax in the hills.

35. The collection under this head has fallen from Rs. 22,827 to Rs. 18,630 owing, it is believed, to the rather unusually high increase in the rates of duty on cotton. The levy of these rates with a vigorous hand reduced the income of the cultivators, who therefore were unable to pay their family tax in full.

Tax on forest produce

36. In the receipts from this source there was an increase of Rs. 2,040, which was due to more careful collection than before.

Tax on forest produce floated down the Fenny.

37. The receipts under this head represent the income for the year 1878-79, when collection was small owing to the reduction of rates of duty ordered in consequence of the famine that was prevalent in the Fenny side of the country in the early part of that year. This accounts for the decrease of Rs. 2,514 shown in the statement. The Maharajah has not yet been paid his share of the Fenny tolls revenue for the last two years.

Tax on cotton and oil-seeds.

38. As already previously said, the increase of Rs. 46,103 is attributable partly to more plentiful produce of the crop, and partly to increase in the rates of duty. The rates were rather oppressive, being over 40 per cent. ad valorem. They were Rs. 2 on each maund of ordinary cotton, the selling price of which was between Re. 4-8 and Rs. 5, and Re. 1-8 on each maund of til, i. e. oil-seed, of which the market value was from Rs. 3 to Rs. 4. In the preceding year these rates were Re. 1-14 and Re. 1-5 respectively, while under the old farmers they were Re. 1-8 for cotton and Rs. 1 for oil seeds. The revenue was collected under khas management, the introduction of which was reported last year. Considering that the crops were good, and that the collection expenses were small, for, as reported last year, the work of collection was chiefly in the hands of the ordinary police, the state could have spared the ungracious act of increasing the rates. It is said that the farmers, with their low rates, used, in the years of good crops, to collect more than was collected last year, for then they used to clear very handsome profits after paying the annual revenue of Rs. 50,000 to the state and bearing an expenditure of nearly Rs. 20,000 a year on account of

establishment.

Royalty on elephants caught.

39. The year was a bad one for the farmers of elephant hunting fields, who after several attempts caught in three fields only 30 animals, against 121 of the preceding year. This accounts for the decrease of the state revenue under this head. The bad success of the farmers was due to want of proper management of the operations, rather than to want of elephants in the forests; for in their first endeavours the farmer's men drove in numerous elephants into their stockades, but failed to keep them in, as the animals broke open the stockades and went away.

40. The other sources of revenue mentioned in the statement are comparatively of minor importance. The decrease of income from the buffalo grazing mehal in not considerable. The increase from Khotagari mehal is attributable to more vigorous collection by the officer employed. The differences under the three following heads mentioned in the return and nominal. The decrease in fines is attributable to the fact that the cases punishable with fines were generally of a trifling character, in which orders for small fines only were passed. The decrease in none of the next three items appears to be noticeable. With respect to Stamp-revenue, however, it may be said that the amount of settlement work in the year was little, and that therefore the procceds from the sale of attempts, as well as those from registration, declined. The increase in the abkari revenue was small. Country liquor is now manufactured at Agurtollah in a single distillery licensed for Rs. 1,200 a year. The licensed holder is authorised also to import and sell European liquor, ganga and opium. The first is obtained from Dacca, and the last two from Barhmanberiah. There was considerable increase under the head of nazars owing, it is believed, to the presents received by the Chief Minister in his tour in the Udoypore division having been credited to the state. The failing off under the head of adda was slight. This tax, which, as reported in previous years, is a tax for the maintenance of village chowkidars, is collected all over the plain country, but chowkidars are appointed in a few places only, as stated before. The decrease under the head of the thatching grass mehal is owing to scanty produce of the grass. The only municipality in the state is that of Agurtollah, and that too exists but in name. Former Political Agents held that municipal laws and rules were not suited to the place. There was no collection under this head during the year. Whatever work was required for keeping the town clean was done at the expense of the state under direction of the general executive officers. The head "miscellaneous" comprises in it the minor incomes, such as proceeds of the jail manufacture, the dispensary receipts, the press receipts, the jalkar revenue, &c. The total collection under this head amounted to Rs. 5,250, against Rs. 4,995 of the previous year, showing thus an increase of Rs. 255, which does not seem to be striking enough to require any explanation.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

41. The arrangements for the conduct of judicial work remained unchanged during the year. Owing to the prolonged absence from his post of the sub-divisional officer of Sonamura, the administration of justice in that sub-division suffered not a little. The Kailashar court worked regularly and satisfactorily as before. In Agurtollah, the lower courts discharged their duties pretty well, but those that were presided over by superior officers failed to give satisfaction to the public, as the returns of their work will show.

42. The judicial statements hereto annexed are the following :-

The total number of cases investigated was 169, in which the percentage of successful investigations was 60.4, against 158, the total number of cases, and 50.6 the percentage of successful investigations, of the

(1) Statement of cases investigated by the police.

preceding year. As to persons, the number tried and the per cent. convicted in the two years were respectively 154, 67.5, and 183, 64.5. The result of police work was satisfactory in both the divisions of Agurtollah and Kailashar, but in the Udoypore division it was not so. There out of 67 cases 33 were investigated unsuccessfully, and out of 63 persons tried 31 were acquitted or discharged.

(2) Statement of criminal cases

In 303 cases tried out of 556 instituted, 638 persons were defendants, of whom 451 were convicted. The result was satisfactory on the whole, though in respect of the Udoypore division there were 83 cases rejected out of 155 instituted, and 114 persons acquitted or discharged out of 215 brought to trial. All the three murder cases mentioned in the statement occurred in this division. One took place in August last in connection with the execution of a warrant against a woman who was required to be produced before the sub-divisional officer as a witness against her husband in an alleged case of petty assault. The complainant, at whose instance the warrant was issued, evidently wanted to cause annoyance to the accused, whose friends therefore opposed the execution. Unfortunately the police-oficer who was entrusted with the work was an unpopular man. The people rose against him and gave him a beating, of which he died. Of the other two cases, in each of which a man was killed, one occurred early in September and the other in November following, both originating from land disputes. All these cases were under preliminary magisterial enquiry for nearly the whole of the remaining part of the official year, and were about its close committed to the sessions, where up to date they are pending.

(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in criminal cases

This statement is anything but encouraging. Of the 57 persons whose appeals were to be disposed of by the ordinary appellate court, the appeals of as many as 22 remained pending at the close of the year. In the Khas appellate court there was not a single new institution. Of the five old cases only one was disposed of in the past 12 months.

Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned.

There is nothing noticeable in respect of this return, except that the number of cases increased from 75 to 105, with proportionate increase in the number of persons concerned. The increase is due to freer intercourse than before between the people of the state and the borderers of the adjacent British districts. The murder case of the Udoypore division is the case of the murder of the police-officer mentioned above.

(5) & (6) Statments of cases under the Extradition Act.

There were altogether six applications from the Maharajah's office for issue of warrants under section 11 of the Extradition Act. Of these, two were rejected, as the offenses complained of did not fall under any one of the sections specified in the schedule of the Act; in two the cases were certified for trial in British territory; and in the remaining two, warrants were granted against two persons, one of whom was arrested and made over to the Maharajah's court, where he was convicted. The other three persons shown in the statement as convicted were concerned in the cases of previous years. Neither of the certified cases come up for trial owing to no action having been taken by the complainants.

(7) & (7a) Statement of civil suits (original).

Suits that come up for trial before the Hill Tipperah courts are generally of a simple character. In the year under report the entire number of new institutions was 223, of the value, on the whole, of Rs. 18,525-3-11, against 249, the number, and Rs. 13,292-5-9, the value, of the previous year. Of the 223 new suits, four only were of the value of above Rs. 500 each, the rest were for smaller sums. In kind they were as follow : 121 bond-suits. 18 suits for goods sold,

3 suits for damages, 20 rent-suits, 21 suits for the possession of lands or buildings, and 40 suits of other descriptions. The total amount of stamp duty realized was Rs. 2,501-14, against Rs. 1,904-11 of the preceding year.

(8) Statement showing the result of appeals in civil suits.

This return, like the return of appeals in criminal cases, shows how little is the amount of work of the appellate courts, and how long do they usually take to do that little. During the year under review the ordinary appellate court had before it 34 cases, of which 17 only were disposed of; while the khas appellate court, out of 13 cases, of which nine were old ones pending from previous years, disposed of only three.

(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subjects were concerned

The number and value of suits by and against British subjects are always small, as decrees of the courts of the state cannot be executed in British territory. The number of such suits during the year under report was 66, against 79 of the preceding year.

JAILS.

43. The internal administration of the jails was good. The prisoners were well housed and clothed and fed according to wants, and attended to with care when sick. Their number at the end of the year was 54, 53 males and one female -- that is, the same as that exported last year. Out of 92 persons who were admitted into the hospital one died and the rest retuned cured. Convicts sentenced to labour were chiefly employed as coolies in the Rajbary. As said in the beginning of this report, the Maharajah a few days ago showed mercy to two life-prisoners and to three others who had long terms of imprisonment to undergo, and released them.

44. Under-trial prisoners, when their cases are before the superior courts, in which disposal of business is slow, were generally obliged to remain in *hajut* for long periods. Of the seven prisoners arrested in the three murder cases of the year noticed before, one came into the Agurtollah jail in the month of August last, and is still remaining there pending trial before the Sessions Court, and the rest having remained from five to seven months in prison in Sunamura were, on their committal in the months of March and April last, transferred to the Agurtollah jail, where up to date they are awaiting the result of their trial. In the fourth case of murder, which occurred this year, the offender is under trial in the Sessions Court, and is in *hajut*. These cases are not unknown to the Maharajah.

45. Besides the jails there are other places where prisoners are kept in confinement pending the disposal of their cases. These places are the *Along and the Deori* of Agurtollah, where people against whom no judicial proceedings are taken are kept in confinement under executive orders.

MILITARY FORCE AND FRONTIER MATTERS.

46. During the year under review the force was numerically increased from 259 to 281, but there was no improvement in its discipline or efficiency. The increase in the numerical strength was mainly owing to the enlistment of an additional company of 16 men made for the purpose of exploring the country about the Surdeng hill, which was undertaken in last cold weather. The object of the exploration was to ascertain whether, as ordered by Government, a military post could be established on that hill for protecting the south-eastern frontier of the state and for opening communication with the force of the Chittagong Hill Tracts stationed at Bhogman. The result of the enquiry has already been separately reported in detail. It may be briefly stated here that it has been found that the proposed post could not be maintained without the utmost difficulties,

and that the object for which it is required could under improved arrangements be carried out by the posts already in existence in that side of the state.

47. At the close of the year communication was opened between the Maharajah's men and the force of the district of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. For this purpose a party of the former had gone from the guard post of Exury, and proceeded as far as the Kassalong river, where, according to previous arrangements, the intended meeting was to take place. On their arrival there, however, they did not find the men whom they had gone to meet, and accordingly returned. Subsequently a party of the Chittagong Hill Tracts force came to the Exury post and saw the officers and men stationed there.

48. The frontiers were perfectly quiet throughout the year; nor in any part of the interior of the state was there any disturbance. The military posts maintained in different parts for the protection of the country were in good order and sufficiently garrisoned.

STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

49. I am unable to report any noticeable improvement under this head. During his tour in the Udoypore division the Nazir Shaheb got a long and straight pathway out from Udoypore to Bisalgar, but it is now overgrown with jungle, and will soon be rendered impassable. The road intended to connect Agaurtollah with Commillah by joining with the Kashba Road on the boundary of the state is yet unaccomplished. Owing to financial difficulties and also to want of sufficient energy and will on the part of the heads of the administration, no work of any public utility was undertaken during the year.

EDUCATION

50. The education of the Maharajah's sons is not conducted as carefully as it ought to be. The Jubaraja, as reported last year, has ceased to be a student. The bara thakur and his brothers continue to be under the instruction of the same teacher as before. None are duly encouraged or allowed to make trips to any towns or settled districts in Bengal; nor are they even seen to go out to inspect any part of the state outside the limits of Agurtollah. Two years ago, at my suggestion, the Maharajah agreed to send the Jubaraja out on a journey to Commillah, but as yet nothing has practically been done about it.

51. Of the schools of the state, those of Agurtollah, Kailashar, and Sonamura are slowly improving; the rest are more or less ephemeral. During the year under report 11 new patshalas were established, against seven of the old that ceased to exist. The entire number at the end of the year was 31 with 647 students, viz. 573 boys and 74 girls, against 28 schools with 668 students, viz. 604 boys and 64 girls of the preceding year.

52. The schools were under the supervision of an inferior officer on Rs. 20 a month, who got them up and shaped them as best he could, with little direction from the heads of the administration. The teachers were most irregularly paid. Some of the stipendiary students were in arrears for over a year.

DISPENSARIES.

53. During the year the state surgeon (who was also in medical attendance on the Agency (establishment) was dismissed for alleged unsuccessful practice and unsatisfactory conduct. His place has not been permanently filled up yet. In accordance to my suggestions, as mentioned in the last annual report, the Maharajah has appointed a native doctor for each of the two sub-divisions of Sonamura and Kailashar.

54. As will be seen from the annexed medical return, the entire number of patients treated during the year in the state hospitals was 5,062, with an average daily attendance of 32.41 against 6,789 patients and 36.55 daily attendance of the preceding year. The cases were generally those of simple fever, diarrhea , and dysentery. Their treatment was satisfactory, 95.67 being cured or relieved out of every hundred treated. The number of persons vaccinated was 540, against 231 of the previous year.

POST-OFFICE.

55. There is nothing new to be mentioned under this head. The only post-office in the state is the one connected with the Agency. It is supported by the Maharajah, but is conducted under the rules and direction of the Imperial Postal Department. It worked well during year under report.

Statment showing the amount of revenue derived from all sources in 1880-81

Serial. Nmmber	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average receipts for the three years 1876-77 1877-78 and 1878-79.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1879-80	Receipts in whole rupees in 1880-81	AS COMPARED WITH 1879-80		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.	Land revenue from plain lands	32,526	35,153	34,717	....	436	
2.	Family tax in the hills	21,887	22,827	18,630	....	4,197	
3.	Tax on forest produce	33,544	35,905	37,944	2,040	....	
4.	Do. on the Fenny	6,330	5,367	2,853	....	2,514	
5.	Tax on cotton and oil-seeds	47,131	48,188	94,291	46,103	....	
6.	Royality on elephants caught	22,630	19,556	11,889	....	7,667	
7.	Baffalo-grazing mehal	2,481	1,854	1,634	....	220	
8.	Khotagari mehal	1,196	969	2,672	1,163	....	
9.	Chuna Sikar mehal	79	76	91	15	....	
10.	Kazai (or Kaisfee) mehal	329	215	123	....	92	
11.	Rents on markets	576	681	640	....	41	
12.	Law and justice fines	3,178	3,878	2,664	....	1,214	
13.	Ditto Ditto Stamp and court fee	7,361	7,809	7,199	...	610	
14.	Ditto Ditto process fee	759	986	972	....	14	
15.	Ditto Ditto Cattle pounds	1,213	1,476	1,123	....	353	
16.	Ditto Ditto abkari (excise)	1,100	1,299	1,448	149	....	
17.	Nazars	2,247	1,501	4,120	2,619	....	
18.	Adda (chowkidar tax) mehal	2,622	1,833	1,696	....	137	
19.	Chaukholla (thatching grass) mehal	2,309	2,973	2,025	....	948	
20.	Municipal tax	451	91	....	....	91	
21.	Registration	....	3,534	1,296	....	2,238	
22.	Miscellaneous	2,422	4,995	5,250	255	....	
	Total	1,92,371	2,01,106	2,32,677	52,344	20,772	Increase on the whole of Rs. 31,572

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR
1881-82

No. 1506, dated Camp Navinagar, the 13th July 1882.
From - G. TOYNBEE, Esq, Officiating magistrate of Tipperah and *ex-officio* Political Agent of Hill Tipperah,
To - The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division

I Have the honour to forward herewith the annual report of the administration of Hill Tipperah for the year 1881-82, prepared, as usual, by the Assistant Political Agent.

2. Under the demi-official orders of the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, I was deputed in January to meet the Chief Commissioner of Assam and the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet to discuss the disputed boundary question pending between Sylhet and Hill Tipperah, and to visit the locality. I left Comillah on the 11th January, and returned on the 11th February, marching *via* Brahmanberiah and Kailashar. I spent three or four days in camp with the Chief Commissioner and his party, and, leaving them at Kamalganj, proceeded to Thalpost. The results of my inquiries into the boundary dispute have been submitted to you in a separate report. (No. 330, dated 14th February 1882)

3. As the Assistant Political Agent was too ill to be able to visit the frontier posts at Dharmanagar, Kailashar, and Kamalganj, I inspected them for him, and left the result on record in the office. I found them on the whole in a very fair state of efficiency.

4. I also inspected the sub-divisional institutions at Kailashar, and was much gratified to find how much good work had been done there by the late sub-divisional officer, Baboo Durga Prasad Gupta, who has since been promoted to the post of dewan of Hill Tipperah. I found in the state of the Kailashar sub-division ample proof of the administrative capacity of a native officer acting independently of European supervision. To the distance of Kailashar from Agurtollah and its comparative inaccessibility this success is perhaps partly due.

5. I returned by way of Agurtollah and had a private interview with the Maharajah; but as my visit was not in the capacity of Political Agent, and I was uncertain of my future, I did not discuss any business matters with him. Shortly after returning to Comillah I took privilege leave, and rejoined the appointment of Political Agent on the 30th March.

6. I have noted, for greater facility of reference, in the margin of the Assistant Political Agent's report such other remarks as I had to make on the administration and affairs of the state, which, I regret to state, far from showing any signs of improvement, have rather tended to deteriorate.

No. 291, dated Agurtollah, the 7th July 1882.
Form - BABOO UMAKANT DAS, Assistant Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,
To - The Magistrate of Tipperah and *ex-officio* Political Agent, Hill Tipperah.

I Have the honour to submit the following report on the administration of the Hill Tipperah Political Agency for the year 1881-82.

2. In paragraph 18 of my last annual report I stated that the authorities at Agurtollah had set on foot a movement for raising their position as Hindoos, and that the Hindoos of the adjacent parts of the district of Tipperah disliked the movement for fear of being called upon to associate with the Maharajah's people.

3. During the year under report the movement was carried on with much earnestness and interest by the

Maharajah's party, but on the other side it was as earnestly opposed by the neighbouring Hindoos. The former continued for a time to endeavour in a friendly way to persuade the latter to come to terms, but in the end were obliged to give up the task as hopeless. They did not, however, abandon their project, but with renewed zeal applied for help to the learned pundits of Vikrampore, in Dacca. Some of the most prominent of these pundits were invited to Agurtollah, and by offer of presents of various kinds were induced to join the Maharajah's side.

4. The above undertaking was a most unfortunate one, for it has already cost the Maharaja a heavy sum of money; and as the pundits who have joined him are being persecuted and otherwise molested in their villages by persons who are not favorably disposed towards the project, the Maharajah has to undergo all sorts of expenses for their protection.

5. There was considerable agitation about the above matter throughout the year in Agurtollah and in the district of Tipperah; but it should be said in justice to the Maharajah that in no instance was any oppression done to anybody by his people. The Maharajah also prudently refrained from asking the Hindoo subjects of, his state to join him. These people therefore lived quite as comfortably as before, in full and undisturbed possession of all their social privileges. For these reasons no interference on the part of this office seemed to be called for, but unofficially I always endeavoured to impress upon the Maharajah and his chief advisers the uselessness of the project. The zeal of the projectors, it seems, has now been somewhat cooled.

I have not thought justified in interfering in this caste question in any way though I think that the Maharajah has been very ill advised in the matter. He would have done better to have been satisfied with his fine position and the respect in which he was universally held, much of which he has now lost, his enemies having taken every opportunity to subscribe to the caste question many occurrences which had in reality no connection whatever with it. A good deal of ill-feeling has been generated on both sides, and tolerance and forbearance have characterised neither.

G.T.

6. The decree for the maintenance allowance of Rs. 600 a month which Kumar Nabadwip Chandra Deb Barman obtained in the Judge's Court of Tipperah, as mentioned in the last annual report, did not satisfy him, for his prayer was also for a declaration of his right to succeed to the raj. He has accordingly gone up to the High Court with an appeal, which is still pending.

ANNUAL TOURS.

7. As already known to you, owing to my absence on privilege leave and subsequent illness I was unable to move long in the interior. During the rains I was out for 16 days, and during the winter for 44 days - in all for two months. In my rounds, however, I saw all the important institutions in the Agurtollah and Udaypore divisions, and was in the midst of the hill-people in many villages. I also inquired in conjunction with the Maharajah's officers into a few cases of boundary disputes concerning the district of Tipperah and the state, which have since been settled. The offices and guard-posts in the Kailashar division were inspected by you.

8. In the winter the Maharajah's principal officers of Agartollah were busy with the caste question, referred to in the beginning of this report. They were therefore unable to go out on tour. It is said, however, that they contemplate to make considerable movement in the interior next cold weather.

The prime minister visited Sonamora in June last.

G. T.

WEATHER AND CROPS.

9. There was a considerable decrease in the rainfall of last year as compared with that of the preceding year; but as the fall was well distributed, it favoured cultivation. The only rain-gauge in the state is that of the

Agency, where the following quantities were recorded during the last two years :

Months	1880-81	1881-82
April	1.70	2.75
May	14.88	8.78
June	17.78	13.48
July	12.59	10.47
August	11.33	13.63
September	13.74	18.68
October	7.81	2.89
November	...	.26
December	...	...
January	...	1.15
February	...	1.16
March	7.13	6.65
Total	86.96	79.90

10. During the year under report cotton was most plentifully grown. The crops of rice and oil-seeds also were full, while chillies, sugar-cane, and tobacco were about the average. On the whole the people got a very good return for their labour in the fields.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

11. Like its predecessor, the year was one of good health and plenty. Except some cases of dyspepsia, fever, and skin-diseases, there was no general outbreak of any disease in any part of the state. The good harvests which the people have continuously reaped for the last three years have greatly improved their condition. Those who contracted debts in the famine year of 1878-79 are now in general free from all liabilities. On the whole the people are quite happy and contented, having got full stores in their homes. There is no class among them who live by begging.

12. Unlike the lower people of the plain lands of Bengal, who are generally prone to commit crime in the years of plenty, the inhabitants of the state are always as a rule unoffending. The small number of cases which came up before the Magistrates concern chiefly the Bengali portion of the Maharajah's subjects who live in the plains. Even amongst these subjects there is no class of professional criminals. The laws regarding bad livelihood are not yet known, not required in the Maharajah's territory.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE

13. There were no noticeable movements among the inhabitants of the plains. Amongst the hill people movements to a certain extent take place every year, for, as said in previous reports, these people are in the habit of changing their abodes whenever they are required to change the places for cutting their jooms. In this way there were some movements among them last year.

14. An attempt is being made to settle in pergunnah Dharmanagar in Kailashar such people as may wish to come there from the neighbouring British districts. Dharmanagar is reported to have once been thoroughly under cultivation,

I visited Dharmanagar last cold weather, and was much struck with its capabilities. Under good management it ought to have a great future before it.
G. T.

and to have yielded at one time the sum of Rs. 60,000 a year to the state. Big tanks, mounds, and other signs of its past prosperity, are yet visible in several parts; but it is now almost entirely covered with jungle. A special officer has recently been appointed to endeavour to reclaim the pergunnah by inducing immigration into it from Sylhet and other districts.

PRICES OF FOOD AND LABOUR

15. Rice, wheat, and gram, were cheap throughout the year. The prices of dried fish, pulses, oil, and ghee were about the average. The following is an account of the rates that prevailed during the year :

	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice, best sort	1	9	0
Rice, common	1	2	0
Wheat	3	12	0
Gram	3	0	0
Salt	5	0	0

16. Salt was Rs. 5 a maund, or annas two a seer, throughout the year, After the circulation of the notification regarding the reduction of the salt duty, the price of the article has been considerably reduced, having come down to Rs. 3-12 a maund, or annas $1^1/_2$ a seer. The reduction has no doubt substantially benefited the poorer classes, but it does not seem that the consumption of the article has any way been increased on that account. The fact is that all classes of people, rice or poor, living in the state have always had their full quantity of salt.

'I am quite satisfied that the reduction in duty has reached the masses, but doubt if it will give any increases in consumption, as the people were well enough off to buy all the salt they required for their own use, and they ridicule the idea of giving it to cattle.

G. T

17. During the year the prices of labour ranged as follows :

	Rs.	A.
1. Able-bodied agricultural labourer	7	8
2. Syce	6	8
3. Common mason, carpenter, or blacksmith	13	0

18. The amount of local labour is very small. Agriculture is followed by all classes of the people in preference to work as day-labourers; consequently for almost every work requiring even a moderate amount of labour it is necessary to get men from places beyond the limits of the state. Skilled labour of no description can be obtained from the country. All that is procurable is imported.

Even this is difficult as the delayed construction of the Agurtollah road shows.

G. T.

MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

19. The list of manufactures is a short one. A few of articles of clothing and bedding, required chiefly for their own use, are all that are made by the hill-people. The *poeries* (a sort o cotton carpet) of the Kukis, and the *puchars* and *shujonies* (which also are used as carpets) of the Manipuris, are the only manufactures of cotton worth any notice, in which some trade is carried on. The Tipperahs make a sort of bamboo mats, which

are largely sold in the bazars. The Reangs and Chakmas make dug-outs (a sort of rough canoes), which they sell to traders of Tipperah and Noakholly.

20. There is no manufacture among the inhabitants of the plains, who by profession are purely agricultural. Those of them who have means and time at their disposal engage themselves in cutting and exporting forest produce from the hills. Whatever articles of manufacture they require they obtain from the tradesmen of the neighbouring districts.

21. There is no mine in the territory near the inhabited tracts. Some coal-mines are said to be in existence far in the interior, but for wants of means for communication it is most difficult to get at them. The necessary outlay for any attempt to work them is not available; nor is it likely that an attempt of the kind will be profitable.

When I was at Kailashar in January last, the sub-divisional officer informed me that coal was found in the neighborhood. In the event of a Railway being made through south Sylhet, it would probably be found worth while to try it.
G. T.

22. In the beginning of the year it was discovered that there was silver in the sands in certain portions of the Lalmayi Hills, in the district of Tipperah. These Hills belong to the Maharajah, and an attempt was made by his men to see what quantity of silver could be found in them; but it produced no satisfactory result.

I saw specimens of the one, and was told that the experiments made with it were anything but profitable.
G. T.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

23. The people of the state, as said before, are essentially agriculturists, who carry on their cultivation for the purpose of getting such quantities of rice and vegetables as they may require for their own consumption. There is not a class among them who live by trade. The whole of the trade of the country therefore is in the hands of strangers, who export the natural produce of the hills and import various kinds of manufactured articles.

24. The chief articles of export, as stated last year, are cotton, oil-seeds, timber, bamboos, thatching grass, canes, charcoal, and dug-outs; also elephants, parrots, and other singing birds. The first is by far the most important of all; it yields to the state nearly half of its entire revenue. The total quantity of cotton exported last year was about 44,256 maunds, and the total value of the export trade was about Rs. 4,99,504. Of imported articles the principal are cloths, sugar, dried fish, salt, European liquor, and fancy-goods.

If the Daudkhandi-Chittagong Railway be made, the cotton trade will I think, develop considerably further.
G. T.

25. The more important seats of trade are the three head-quarters stations of the state, viz. Agurtollah, Sonamura, and Kailashar, at each of which are held a by-weekly market and an annual fair. Trade in the forest produce of the hills is chiefly carried on in places close to the several toll-stations, which are situated by the sides of rivers

When I was with the Chief Commissioner of Assam in January last, on my way to Kailashar, the subject of the levy of tolls on hill produce passing through Sylhet was discussed. The state is naturally very aversee to any such measure, and I certainly should not recommend it in the Tipperah district. The establishment in British territory of the Maharajah's toll stations is forbidden, and I am inquiring whether the prohibition is really observed or not. There is some reason to think that the Maharajah's officers, do sometimes collect tolls in British territory owing to the inaccessibility and jungly nature of their own.
G. T.

by which the articles are floated down. The seat of trade in elephants is in Kailashar, close to the Sylhet frontier.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING ON GENERAL OR SPECIAL SUBJECTS.

26. As mentioned in previous reports, the inhabitants of the state are by their nature submissive. Their voice therefore is seldom heard against matters which have the approval and sanction of their ruler. It should be said in justice to the present ruler that he rarely does anything which is against the feeling and wishes of his subjects. The caste question, mentioned before, in which the chief officers of the state have so much interest, does not touch the native residents. The Manipuris and other Hindoos of Hill Tipperah have not been asked to join the movement on the subject.

27. The intelligent portion of the officers and subjects of the state look upon the movement about the caste question with great disfavour, because it increases the liabilities of the raj. The bulk of the lower orders of the Tipperah's also do not like it because they cannot quite appreciate its objects. About the beginning of the movement the Tipperahs were all forbidden to eat fowls, pork, and other things which the Hindoos consider to be impure, and also to allow their women to go out to attend bazars. The injunction proved to be too hard for the inhabitants of the hills, and so on their representation they were eventually exempted from it.

EFFECT OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES AND ARRANGEMENTS.

28. The following changes in the administrative arrangements took place during the year. These changes, it will be seen, were made more in the interest of the officers concerned than in that of the state.

29. The sub-divisional officer of Kailashar, who had for a number of years managed the sub-division with great success, was unnecessarily transferred to Agurtollah, where he has been made the sudder dewan. His place at Kailashar has been given to a new comer, for whose assistance it has been found necessary to appoint an additional officer. Much could have been expected from the dewan in his present capacity if practically he had been given sufficient powers; but unfortunately, like other superior officers at Agurtollah, his authority in reality is very limited.

The officer referred to, Babu Durga Prasad Gupta, managed the Kailashar sub-division for many years with greats success. When I was there last January, I was much struck with his administration. If the Maharajah would give him some real power, he would, I am sure, reform many things at Agurtollah; but without any power he is good material wasted.
G. T.

30. Another change in the administration was the arrangement made for transferring the power of controlling the police from the sub-divisional officers to a general officer at headquarters under the title of District Superintendent of Police. A Tipperah Thakur, who was a dismissed head constable of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, was appointed District Superintendent. This too, was an unnecessary appointment, as the sub-divisional Magistrates were quite able to keep the small police force in proper control. The District Superintendent is now dead, and it is hoped that he will have no successor at present.

31. A Cotton Superintendent with a suitable establishment has been appointed to supervise the work of collection of cotton-tax -- a work which heretofore used to be performed by the police under the guidance of the sub-divisional officers, and which with a little more attention on the part of the latter could have efficiently been performed by them. The Superintendent appointed is a relation of a court favourite.

32. Two years ago in the Udaypore division large tracts of land, then under cultivation, were surveyed with

a view to settlement. The survey work was completed at considerable expenditure; but for the absence of the sub-divisional officer from his station, and for other avoidable causes, the settlement work was left unperformed. This work was taken in hand during the year under report, but it was found, as it could have been well understood before, that the work could not be proceeded with without fresh local inquiries. A batch of canoongoes have accordingly been appointed to make such inquiries - a result which I anticipated in the beginning, and about which I informed the Maharajah at the time.

33. More than two years ago a proposal was made for opening a small magisterial office at Bilania. Since the date of the proposal the necessity for the establishment of the office became gradually greater. The Maharajah has accordingly issued orders for opening the office without further delay, and the officer who was appointed to take charge of the office, but who, as reported last year, was hitherto employed at Sonamura, has received directions to proceed to the new place of his work.

34. In the Maharajah's zemindary establishment also there have been some notable changes. At the close of the year the Maharajah found reason to be dissatisfied with the conduct of his manager, Mr. Larminie, whose appointment was reported to Government in this office No. 307, dated the 19th September 1877. Mr. Larminie has accordingly been dismissed. His duties have been proposed to be entrusted to the dewan at Comillah.

> I am now on my way to Agurtollah with the express object of trying to induce the Maharajah to make some retrenchments in his expenditure, which tends year by year to outgrow his income His kindness of heart and weakness of character do not give much hope of success; but the attempt is worth making as the state is getting into debt more and more helplessly. G. T.

35. The settlement of pergunnah Nurnagar, which is an important part of the Maharajah's zemindary, yielding more than Rs. 75,000 a year, is going on for a long time. The settlement, if it were carefully conducted after proper survey, might double the revenue; but unfortunately the work is being done very slowly and irregularly. It was in contemplation to place this work under charge of the present dewan, and perhaps with this view he was brought from Kailashar. But on that officer's elevation to the dewanship a new appointment of a Deputy Collector was made at Agurtollah, and the officer selected to hold the appointment has been deputed to Nurangar to do the settlement work. Thus the dewan's transfer from Kailashar has been the cause of the creation of three new appointments in the superior service of the state.

36. The main spring of all irregularity in the administration is the chief of the state himself. He is yearly growing less active and less mindful of his duties. His chief minister is one of his relations, who cannot get work done by him regularly. There is no want of good officers and advisers in his service, but none have actually any power, and there is no acknowledged and duly respected head amongst them. The Maharajah is kind and affable to all; but as he is weak-minded and credulous to a degree, many of his officers can have opportunity to undo what has been done by others; so as a natural consequence no body likes to take any real interest in his work.

> I quite agree with what the Political Agent says in paragraph 36 and 37. He has described the disease and the remedy; but the Maharajah will not or cannot, apply the latter, and though the state is outwardly and nominally governed on the principles in vogue in British territory, it is in wardly ruined by the intrigues and influences which are more or less at work in all native state. It may not be ill managed as such but it does not practice what it professes in the way of government. I am not the first Political Agent who has pointed this out, and at the Maharajah's age I see no chance of reform unless government take some more than formal notice of the subject.
>
> As a personal friend of the Maharajah, it is disagreeable to me to make these remarks; But I should fall in my duty if I did not make them.
>
> G. T.

37. Under the above circumstances it is necessary, as reported in previous years, that there should be at the head of the Maharajah's service a conscientious and able officer, who should be vested with full powers for the administration of the state in its several branches. It is too much to expect that at his present age the Maharajah should be able to gain such capacity for work as is necessary for the task. He might select some one from the present staff of his officers and invest him with power. I have frequently advised him in this respect, but it seems that he does not wish to give real authority to any.

STATISTICAL INQUIRIES

38. Except the investigation made for the purpose of ascertaining the quantity and quality of the silver said to be obtainable in the Lalmayi Hills in the district of Tipperah, as stated in paragraph 22, no statistical inquiry of any kind was undertaken during the year. The state officers have ample opportunity to ascertain every year the number and classes of population, the various ways and means for raising the revenue and reducing the expenditure of the administration, and other particulars of the kind; but it seems that little advantage is taken of the opportunity possessed. The collector of the family-tax might gather much interesting information regarding the inhabitants of the hills, while from the several toll-offices might be obtained information about the nature and quantity of the different kinds of forest produce on which duties are levied. The kazi and the raj pundit have accounts of marriages amongst the Mahomedans and Hindoos respectively, while the *prabhu*, i. e. the chief representative of the family of the Maharajah's spiritual guide, can furnish all sorts of information about the vaishnavas, who constitute what is called his "Bhabok mehal," and from whom he realizes perquisites on various occasions. From these persons, and from other officers employed in the interior, valuable information can be collected every year by the Maharajah's sudder office on points relating to the material condition of the people without the necessity of employing any separate agency for the purpose; but evidently there is no attempt made in this direction.

It should be noted that the Maharajh cordially assisted in the census operation after the receipt of a letter from Sir. A Eden on the subject, though he was inclined at first to throw cold water on the project. G. T.

There are many requirements to be met before the collection of statistics but those that are available are not utilized. G. T.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME, AND CIVIL JUSTICE

39. The strength of the police force, as reported last year, is quite sufficient for the purpose of maintaining peace among the people. The hill tribes do not much require the assistance of the civil police whose services therefore are confined chiefly to the residents of the plains. Exclusive of small outpost, there are altogether 18 police-stations in the country, each containing on the average one officer and 5 men. The number of villages in the plains is estimated at 400, with a gross population of about 45,722; so there is one police-station for every 22 villages having 2,540 inhabitants. This is, no doubt, a high proportion.

40. But the police of the state have not only to look to the preservation of peace among the subjects, but also to serve as revenue officers. The Khuski Bankar mehal, the Ghasury mehal, the Adda mehal, and in some cases the cotton mehal, are in their hands, and the work connected with the collection of revenue under these heads is by no means inconsiderable.

41. The people being in general of a peaceful disposition, the work of the police in their own department is small. On the average 10 police cases only took place in each station during the year. Among these there were on the whole 6 cases of murder, against 3 cases of the kind of the previous year. Such cases, as remarked

last year, are now occurring more frequently than before, owing in the main to want of promptness on the part of the judicial officers in the administration of justice.

42. Complaint of irregular payment is as frequent from the police now as it was before. Owing to their inability to regularly pay the police, the superior officers of the state find it not infrequently difficult to enforce strict discipline among them. It is said that against all standing orders on the subject the police in general now appropriate to themselves such parts of the collections they make on account of the state revenue as may not exceed their demand, and this is done with the tacit consent of their superiors.

This is very backward step, and will be brought to the Maharajah's personal notice when I reach Agurtollah on the 20th instant. It shows also the necessity for retrenchment before it is too late. G. T.

43. The chowkidari system has not yet been introduced throughout the country. It is only in the head quarters stations, and, through the exertions of the late sub-divisional officer of Kailashar, in the villages in the plains of that division that chowkidars are employed. A tax known as adda, or chowkidari-tax, which was evidently originally intended to meet the cost of village watch, is however levied in all villages in the plains.

44. The administration of civil justice is chiefly conducted by the Tipperah Thakurs, who are either relatives of, or dependents on, the Maharajah. The work done by them is generally fair, but it is performed very slowly - a circumstance which deters people from applying to courts on many occasions. These Thakurs are all self-made men, who have not received any school education nor any training for the kind of work they are required to perform. Credit is therefore due to them for the generally fair judgments they pass in the cases which come before them. One thing noticeable is that they are not in receipt of any pay, or none that is adequate to the responsible posts they hold. They are all supported by the Maharajah; but they would get their maintenance allowance whether they worked in any capacity or not.

45. At each of the head-quarters station of the Udaypore and the Kailashar divisions there is a salaried Deputy Magistrate having powers to take up criminal, revenue, and civil cases. Both of these officers are Bengalis, whose work is subject to the supervision of a Thakur Judge of Agurtollah. It will be thus seen that in the judicial as well as in the executive service of the state the higher authorities are all Thakurs, who as a class are men of limited experience and education.

ADMINISTRATION OF REVENUE

46. There is generally a sad want of forethought and determination on the part of the Maharajah in matters regarding the administration of his revenue. This is the inevitable result of his extremely good nature, or rather the weakness of his mind. Application to him for bonuses or for appointments, when supported by recommendations from any one of those by whom he is generally surrounded, hardly goes in vain, whether the state of his treasury or that of his service may admit of it or not. Then he has a large and growing family, whose expenses are daily increasing; so notwithstanding that the income of the state is improving, the pecuniary difficulties continue unabated.

It is also, I believe, contemplated to abolish the appointment of the German artist entertained on the Maharajah's personal staff. This and the abolition of Mr. Larninie's appointment would effect a saving of from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 20,000 a year, a sum which would go far to pay the interest due on debts. The government revenue of the Maharajah's semidry is seldum paid without borrowing and the road cess is seldom or over paid in with it. I think and hope that the Maharajah now begins to see the real necessity of retrenchment. So long as the money market was easy and he could borrow as much as he wished on a simple bond, so long he cared little; but now that the money marked has tightened, the shoe begins to pinch. I trust in time I shall speak seriously to the Maharajah on my arrival at Agurtollah. There is a 'prime minister' and a 'minister associate', I think one would be ample.

G. T.

The Maharajah was already largely involved in debt before, and yet additional liabilities have been incurred during the year. Under these circumstances it is absolutely necessary that every possible retrenchment should be made in his expenditure. I have frequently taken the opportunity to offer to him advice and suggestions in this direction. Some retrenchments have already been determined upon, that is to say it has been decided that the post of the manager of the Maharajah's zemindary should be abolished and his duties, as said before, entrusted to the dewan. It has been decided also that no successor to the second naib dewan of Comillah, who is dead, should be appointed at present. Further retrenchments are in contemplation. Should the Maharajah thus go on in the way he has followed, he may ere long get rid of his difficulties.

47. The total amount of revenue collected during the year from the various sources of income, as mentioned in the accompanying revenue statement, was Rs. 2,37,789, against Rs. 2,32,677 of the previous year and Rs. 1,97,388, the average of the next preceding three years. It will be thus seen that the collection has been going on improving for the last four years.

48. The realisation in the Maharajah's zemindary was however, not so good. It is said that owing to continued prevalence of low rates in the rice market for the last two years the ryots have been reduced to a rather straitened condition, and that they have not therefore been able to pay up the Maharajah's dues in full.

This is the case with all zeminders in the district.

G. T.

49. As mentioned in previous reports, the revenue statement submitted by the Maharajah's office does not afford sufficient criterion to judge of the real financial position of the state. It gives no account either of demands or expenditure; and without information on these point no correct opinion can be formed as to whether or not the state dues are regularly and fully realised, and as to how the money goes. If the Maharajah's officers had to furnish to the Agency a simple annual statement containing information on these heads, it would have a most wholesome effect upon their general revenue administration.

I strongly urge this view. A statement of receipts is no check, and of but little use, unless accompanied by an outline of expenditures under main heads. No attempt need be made to interfere with the details of the Maharajah's personal expenditure, which would be shown in one lump sum.

50. The principal sources of income were as before (1) land revenue, (2) family tax (3) tax on forest produce, (4) cotton tax (5) stamp duty, and (6) royalty on elephants caught. There was no fluctuation in the amount of receipts under the first head, which is realised chiefly under khas management. The collection made last year was Rs. 34,717, which was exactly the amount of receipts of the previous year.

51. In *family-tax*, which is also realised under khas management, the receipts fell from Rs. 18,630 to Rs. 17,937. As stated last year, owing to the high rates of duty levied on cotton and oil-seeds, the hill-people could not advantageously dispose of these articles, and therefore were unable to clear in full all their liabilities.

52. *Tax on forest produce* is partly realised under khas management and partly through farmers. The increase of Rs. 5,186 under this head was chiefly due to the fact that finding the sale of cotton not sufficiently profitable, the inhabitants of the hills exported more of timber, bamboo, and other forest produce than before.

53. The amount received during the year on account of the collection of tolls on articles floated down the Fenny represents the Maharajah's share of the collection for the two years ending 31st March 1881 : hence is the increase under this head of Rs. 8,380. The amount of Rs. 2,853, which was received in 1880-81, was for the year 1878-79, which was a year

The Maharajah's share of the Fenny tolls in not remitted to him so punctually as is desirable. In two successive years I have had to make special representations on the subject.

G. T.

of famine in the hills, and in which for that reason and for the high rates of duty then prevalent exportation of forest produce was necessarily small.

54. *Tax on cotton and oil-seeds.* - The increase of revenue received under this head was due to more plentiful produce of the crops. The rates of duty were just the same as reported last year, viz. Rs. 4-12 on every maund of cleaned and Rs. 2 on every maund of uncleaned cotton, and Re. 1-8 on every maund of oil-seeds. These rate were high and disadvantageous to the growers of the articles. The produce, as said before, was most abundant, but the state of the market was throughout the year low. Exporters of cotton do not find their trade now to be so profitable as before, owing, it is said, to the comparatively small demand for the article received from abroad. At the close of the year there remained almost in every toll-station large quantities of cotton indisposed of, on which the required duty was not paid. Were it not for these circumstances, the increase in cotton revenue would have been very handsome. A slight reduction in the rates would have caused more exportation, and thereby would have proved more profitable alike to the state and to all others concerned.

55. *Royalty on elephants caught.* - Out of the numerous elephant-hunting fleds in the state, four only were worked during the year. In two of them owing to bad management the operations were unsuccessful, only one elephant being captured in each; in the remaining two 53 elephants were caught, of which one died. The total price of these animals was Rs. 48,035, of which about one-fourth was due to the state as royalty. But the purchasers were unable to pay the whole price immediately. They accordingly executed bonds for the amounts that remained unpaid. This accounts for the decrease of revenue under this head.

56. Of the other sources of revenue, there is nothing particular to be said of any. In the buffalo-grazing mehal there was a small increase of Rs. 165, which was due to more careful collection. In Khotagari, Chuna Shikhar, and Kazai mehals, as well as in rents on markets, the differences between the recipts of the last two years were insignificant. In law and justice the decrease of Rs. 415 was chiefly owing to the small amount of judicial work done in the Udaypore division in consequence of long absence from duty of the sub-divisional officer. The increases in stamp fees, court fees, and process fees are attributable to increase of litigation in the civil courts in the Agurtollah, and Kailashar division, resulting partly from more reliance being placed upon the courts, and partly from easy condition of the people. With the extension of cultivation cattle-pounds have been increased, and the pound rules more vigorously enforced. From this resulted the small increase of revenue under this head. A new settlement has been made of the Abkari mehal, by which the right of manufacturing and selling liquor in Agurtollah has been granted to a single Company on an annual jama of Rs. 1,200. The decrease of Rs. 685 under this head is attributable to laxity in realisation. In nazars is included all premia realised in cases of settlement of revenue. It is said that last year the number of such cases was much less than the number of the preceding year, and that in consequence thereof there was a falling off of receipts under the head of nazarana. The small increase of Rs. 449 under the head of adda was due to more careful collection of the tax by the police. The increase under the head of chaukhola and the falling off under registration were both insignificant. The head "miscellaneous" includes in it numerous small items, such as receipts from jails, dispensaries, the printing press, jalkar, & c., as well as all forfeitures, compensations, sale-proceeds, &c. The income under this head is therefore always liable to more or less fluctuation, as there is always some increase or decrease in each of the component items.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

57. The administration of justice is chiefly in the hands of Thakurs, who always, endeavour to do their work

in the same manner in which judicial work is done in British courts. The laws and rules prevalent in British territory are followed in spirit. The chief complaint of the people against the courts of the state is that long delay generally takes place in the disposal of cases. The complaint is not without foundation, for sometimes even a criminal case has been known to take more than a year in its disposal. The amount and nature of work done by these courts during the year will be known from the under mentioned judicial statements which are annexed to this report.

58. *(1) Statement of cases investigated by the police.* - The total number of such cases was 186, against 169 of the previous year. Of these 94, or a little above half, were investigated successfully. Of the 146 persons brought before Magistrates 98, or 67.1 per cent, were convicted. The police work of the Agurtollah division was comparatively more satisfactory than that of either of the other two divisions.

59. *(2) Statement of criminal cases.* - The total number of cases fell from 586 to 517. The decrease was in the Agurtollah as well as in the Udaypore courts. In Kailashar there was slight increase. Of the 24 cases of sorious offences against the person, as many as nine were cases of murder, three of which occurred in the Agurtollah, five in the Udaypore - viz. three old and two new - and one in the Kailashar division. Altogether 35 persons were brought to trial in these murder cases, of whom eight were discharged or acquitted, 16 remained under trial at the close of the year, and 11 were convicted. Among the last, three were sentenced to be hanged. and eight to be rigorously imprisoned for various terms. One of the former and one of the latter escaped from the jail before their sentences could be carried out. In the murder cases of the Udaypore division is included the case of human sacrifice, on which a special report has already been submitted. In this case 11 persons were brought before the Magistrate as accused, of whom nine have been committed to the sessions, where their trial is now pending, and two discharged. The cases of the class of "serious offences against property" were not very important in character. Both the dacoity and arson cases of Agurtollah were without foundation, and were therefore rejected. The arson case of Udaypore was evidently a got-up one, in which the accused was acquitted. In the Kailashar division there were altogether six cases of serious offences against property, viz. one case of mischief by killing a cow, which was rejected without inquiry; two cases of robbery, which were not established, and in which the accused were accordingly discharged; and three cases of forgery, which remained under trial at the close of the year. The entire number of persons tried during the year in the three divisions was 565, of whom 201 were British subjects and the rest subjects of the state. Conviction was obtained in 72.21 percent on the whole.

60 *(3) Statement showing the result of appeals is criminal cases.* - During the year I frequently brought to the notice of the Maharajah and his principal officers the fact of the great delay which heretofore generally took place in the disposal of business in the appellate courts. The present statement shows that there has been considerable improvement in this respect. Out of the 59 appeals in the ordinary appellate court only there remained pending at the close of the year, while all the 9 appeals in the khas appellate court were entirely disposed of. The result of the appeals was generally much favourable to the appellants.

61. *(4) Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned.* - The number of cases concerning British subjects is gradually increasing. This shows that the courts are by degrees gaining the confidence of the people. There was no case of any particular interest deserving special notice. The comparatively large number of defendants tried in the Udaypore division was owing to the fact that many people were concerned in a few petty cases of theft of sal-tree, in which they were convicted but let off with

small fines.

62. *(5 & 6) Statements of cases under the Extradition Act.* - There was a small increase in the number of such cases during the year. All the applications for warrants received from the Maharajah's office were granted except one, in which the case was one of the character of a civil suit. Of the 12 persons against whom warrants remained unexecuted at the close of the year one is dead, three are reported to have taken shelter within the Maharajah's territory; against the remaining 8 every legal step has been taken to cause their appearance, but none has proved successful. Applications for warrant are now made by the Maharajah's office with more care than before. There was no case during the year which it was found necessary or proper to certify under section 9 of the Extradition Act.

63. *(7 & 7A) Statements of civil suits.* - The total number of new suits increased from 223 to 236, and the total value thereof from Rs. 18,525.3 to Rs. 22,836-5-10. The amount of stamp fees realised on account of these suits was Rs. 2,856-6, against Rs. 2,501-14 and Rs. 1,904-11 of the preceding two years. It will be thus seen that in the course of these three years the fees have increased more than 37 per cent. As in previous years, the suits were generally for small sums, only five being of the value of more than Rs. 500 each. They were in kind 129 bond-suits, 26 rent-suits, 8 suits for goods sold, 4 suits for damage, 14 suits for recovery of possession of lands and buildings, and 55 suits of other description. Of the entire number that came up for hearing, only 60, or about 20 percent, were contested, the rest having been rejected, withdrawn, or decreed *ex-parte*. In 39 out of the 60 contested cases judgment was passed in favour of the plaintiffs.

'Chits' are summary orders for recovery of money not exceeding Rs. 2 in amount in any one case passed on petitions made for the purpose. These orders have the force of lawful decree, but after payment the debtors have the right to bring suits against the petitioners for any loss sustained.

64. *(8) Statement showing the result of appeals in civil suits.*- As said in respect of the statement of appeals in criminal cases, there has been improvement in the working of the appellate courts lately. Though the number of appeals increased, there was not a single case pending in the ordinary appellate court at the close of the year. The khas appellate court also disposed of some cases. Each of these courts has the power to hear appeals in civil as well as in criminal cases. The former is presided over by the Maharajah's son-in-law, and the latter by the Jubraj.

65. *(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subject were concerned.* - There has been a slight increase in the number of suits in which British subjects were concerned over the number of such suits of the previous year. The increase is particularly noticeable under the head of suits in which British subjects were defendants. But as decrees of the courts of the state connot be executed in British territory, suits against. British subjects who have no property in the state, and who are not for the time being residents thereof, are practically of little avail to the plaintiffs.

JAIL

66. There were on the whole 50 prisoners in jail at the close of the year under review, against 54 of the previous year. The prisoners are always treated with kindness and care, and are ordinarily employed in various sorts of earthwork and in clearing jungle and constructing and repairing thatched buildings. They are also employed in making basket and chairs. Some of them have been taught the art of manufacturing carpets of various patterns, on which they work with diligence. But owing to the paucity of the number of prisoners the

cost of the jail administration far exceeds the price of the prison labour.

67. The houses occupied by the prisoners are all thatched building situated within a bamboo enclosure. Two masonry buildings with a pucca wall all round are now in course of construction for the better and safer accommodation of the jail people.

MILITARY AND FRONTIER MATTERS.

68. The military force at the end of the year consisted of 56 officers and 250 men, divided into five companies. Of these 76 were Gurkhas and 12 Christians; the latter are natives of the state. About half the number of the force are drilled and equipped sufficiently well and they are fit for active service; the rest are hardly better than ordinary police burkundazes and chowkidars. The chief officers are all court favourites, who do not seem to possess much military attainments. Owing to financial difficulties the men are generally kept in arrears of pay; but as the majority of them are residents of the state, who can carry on cultivation of lands in their homes, the irregularity in the payment of their salary does not cause any great dissatisfaction to them. It is nevertheless mainly owing to this that proper discipline is generally wanting among the force.

69. The frontier, and also the interior of the state were fully quiet during the year. There was no sign of disturbance in any part of the country. The several guard-posts were kept up according to requirements. I visited the posts of the Udaypore division, and found them to be in sufficiently good order. The posts of the Kailashar division are by far the most important. They were inspected by you in the last cold weather.

I found them in good order and apparently all that was necessary.
G. T.

70. During the year the Maharajah's officers and the police of the Chittagong Hill Tracts met each other for the purpose of exploring the country about the Surdeng Hills in the south-eastern frontier of the state with a view to arrange plans for opening regular patrol communication between them. Mr. Pughe, the District Superintendent of Police, Chittagong Hill Tracts, in consultation with the Deputy Magistrate of Sonamura, who met him for the purpose, proposed (as I recommended it in my reports noted in the margin) the transfer of the Eksari post on the Gumti in the Maharajah's territory to a convenient place higher up the river, and the establishment of an advanced guard-post in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, so that the two posts might be within such convenient distance of each other as would render regular communication between them practicable. The Maharajah has been addressed on the subject, and his opinion upon it has been requested.

No. 741 dated 28th March 1880

No. 718 dated 21st March 1881

The Maharajah is es entitled to the thanks of Government for the prompt manner in which he met their wishes in this matter.
G.T.

STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

71. There is nothing to be said under this head in addition to what has been stated in previous reports. The road from Agurtollah to the boundary towards Kasha, a distance of a little more than two miles, the construction of which was taken in hand about five years age, is yet unfinished. On pressing requests from this office the work on the road, which was stopped for some years, was again taken in hand last cold weather. It progressed for a time satisfactorily, but owing partly to bad management by the contractors and partly to the occurrence of a case of cholera among

As the road-cess have experienced similar difficulties on the other side of the boundary, I cannot complain of this delay until the break in the chain of communication is due entirely to the state. The ferries on the road have been declared to be public ferries, and I hope to report next year that the road between Commillah and Agartollah is open to cart traffic all the year round.
G. T.

the labourers the latter, who were mostly up-country men, went away before its completion. It is hoped that the work will be finished next year.

EDUCATION

72. Sufficient interest is not taken in matters of education. On account of the caste question the head-master of the Agurtollah school, which is the largest institution of the kind in the state left the Maharajahs's service about the beginning of the year under report, and his place has not yet been filled up. The schools in interior were allowed to remain uninspected for a great portion of the year. Teachers as well as stipendiary students were always largely in arrears. Under these circumstances the working of the department, as might be expected, was anything but satisfactory.

It is also very difficult to get the amount of the Maharajah's scholarships in the Tipperah district. G. T.

73. The number of schools, as shown by the return submitted by the Maharajah's office, was reduced from 21 to 27 and so the number of students decreased from 647 to 609. Most of the schools in the interior are small patshalas, where reading and writing are taught by untrained gurus. The Thakurs of Agurtollah are gradually showing more desire for education for their children. Many of them keep private tutors at their home, and notwithstanding that the number of students at school has on the whole decreased, the number of pupils of the Thakur class has increased from 38 to 58.

74. Among the Maharajah's children the Bara Thakur only is in the habit of reading before a tutor, who has been kept for the purpose. He is also inclined to go out to travel, but is unable to do so on account of the financial difficulties of the state. The Jubraj and his younger brother are now all grown-up young men, who do not prosecute any study, nor do they take any active part in the administration of the country.

DISPENSARIES.

75. There are now four dispensaries in the state, instead of three as before. They are under charge of native doctors, over whom there is a superior medical officer, viz. the Maharajah's house physician. The last-mentioned officer is also the Agency Surgeon. There is no arrangement for keeping indoor patients in any of the dispensaries. Two such patients, however, were admitted into the new Agurtollah hospital under special circumstances. One of them, who had been suffering from dysentery, died while under treatment.

76. The total number of patients treated during the year was 7,711, of whom 7,187 were cured, against 5,099 treated and 4,843 cured in the provious year. The average daily attendance in hospitals was 53.9 and the entire number of operations performed was 111. The most prevalent diseases were, as in previous years, fever, diarrhoea, dysentery, and skin diseases.

POST-OFFICE

77. The Agurtollah British post-office attached to the Agency having become a self supporting one, the Director-General of Post-Offices thought fit to relieve the Maharajah at present partly from his responsibility of paying its expenses. The office has accordingly been taken over by the department but the line from here to Kasba continues to be maintained at the cost of the Maharajah. This arrangement has taken place since the close of the year. In January last a case of robbery occurred in connection

A reward has been offered by the Postal Department, and the case has not yet been given up as hopeless. G. T.

with a mail despatched from here. The case was promptly inquired into by the British police, but no satisfactory result ensued.

MISCELLANEOUS

78. During the year under report the Chief Commissioner of Assam and yourself visited the northern frontier of the state and inquired about a question of boundary connected with that part of the country. In many places the boundary between the state and the adjacent districts is liable to be encroached upon by both the British and the state subjects owing to the pillars by which it is marked being generally far from one another and the intervening tracts being covered with jungle.

79. Under orders of the Surveyor-General, Mr. Chennel surveyed in last cold weather a portion of the Maharajah's territory in the Kailashar division. The result of his work, however, is not yet known.

80. The places where transit duties on forest produce are ordered to be levied are not always situated in convenient localities. It was understood that for this reason taxable articles were in some instances taken across the borders into British territory, and there the duties were levied. Accordingly I addressed the Maharajah's office on the subject, and requested it to prevent the practice if it existed anywhere : I am now informed by it that in no case are the tolls allowed to be collected in British dominion.

81. Baboo Gobind Chandra Das, head-clerk of this office, maintained his character for trustworthiness and diligence, and discharged his duties satisfactorily throughout the year.

Statement showing the amount of revenue derived from all sources in 1881-82.

Serial number.	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average receipts for the three years, 1877-78, 1878-79, and 1879-80.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1880-81.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1881-82.	AS COMPARED WITH 1880-81.		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.	Land revenue from plain lands	33,770	34,717	34,717	...	...	
2.	Family tax in the hills	21,026	18,630	17,987	...	643	
3.	Tax on forest produce	37,860	37,944	43,130	5,186	...	
4.	Do. on the Fenny	5,268	2,853	11,233	8,380	...	
5.	Do on cotton and oil seeds	47,736	94,291	99,576	5,285	...	
6.	Royalty on elephants caught	21,576	11,880	5,076	...	6,813	
7.	Buffallo-grazing mehal	2,301	1,634	1,799	165	...	
8.	Khotagari mehal	1,029	2,072	2,074	2	...	
9.	Chuna-sikar mehal	81	91	76	...	15	
10.	Kazai (kaisfee) mehal	299	123	166	43	...	
11.	Rents on markets	559	640	645	5	...	
12.	Law and justice fines	3,422	2,664	2,199	...	465	
13.	Ditto Ditto stamp and court fee	7,174	7,199	7,815	616	...	
14.	Ditto ditto - process fees	817	972	1,361	389	...	
15.	Ditto ditto - cattle pounds	1,293	1,123	1,605	482	...	
16.	Ditto ditto - abkari (excise)	1,231	1,448	763	...	685	
17.	Nazars	2,355	4,120	898	...	3,222	
18.	Adda (chowkhlari-tax) mehal	2,520	1,696	2,165	469	...	
19.	Chankhola (thatching-grass) mehal	2,667	2,625	2,096	71	...	
20.	Municipal tax	338	...	...	...	...	
21.	Registration	...	1,296	1,164	...	132	
22.	Miscellancous	4,068	5,250	1,244	...	4,006	
	Total	1,97,388	2,32,677	2,37,789	21,093	15,981	Increase on whole of Rs. 5,112

1-JUDICIAL

Statement of cases investigated by the Police in 1881-82

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENCE	CASES					PERSONS.					
				Investigated							
	Under investigation at the close of the previous year	Reported during the year.	Total	Successfully	Unsuccessfully.	Under investigation at the close of the year	Arrested and brought to trial.	Convicted.	Acquitted and discharged	Died, escaped, or transferred	Under trial at the close of the year
Agurtollah Division											
1. Serious offiences against the person	...	7	7	6	1	...	12	11	...	...	1
2. Minor Ditto ditto	...	3	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	..
3. Serious Ditto property	...	4	4	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	..
4. Minor Ditto ditto	1	29	30	21	9	...	22	16	5	...	1
5. Miscellaneous	...	9	9	8	1	...	12	12	...	...	
Total	1	52	53	35	18	...	46	39	5	...	2
Udaypore Division											
1. Serious offiences against the person	...	1	1	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
2. Minor Ditto ditto	...	4	4	1	3	...	1	1	...	...	..
3. Serious Ditto property	...	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	..
4. Minor Ditto ditto	...	44	44	16	28	...	28	8	12	...	8
5. Miscellaneous	...	13	13	9	4	...	15	12	2	...	1
Total	...	63	63	28	35	...	47	21	15	...	11
Kailashar Division											
1. Serious offiences against the person	...	4	4	2	2	...	2	1	1	...	...
2. Minor Ditto ditto	...	3	3	1	2	...	1	1	...	...	...
3. Serious Ditto property	...	2	2	1	1	...	2	1	1	...	...
4. Minor Ditto ditto	4	57	61	27	32	2	48	35	13	...	...
5. Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	4	66	70	31	37	2	53	38	15	...	...
GRAND TOTAL	5	181	186	94	90	2	146	98	35	...	13

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR
1882-83

No. 1251, dated Comillah, the 25th June 1883
From - J. A. Hopkins, Esq., Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah,
To - The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

I Have the honour to submit the Assistant Political Agent's report on the administration of Hill Tipperah. It is late, but in order to save time I submit it in original. The chief subjects of note in the report are the deaths of the Maharani and Thakur Dina Bandhu Deb, the Prime Minister; the Maharajah's short tour; and his status as an independent prince being interpreted by the High Court. The trip to Brindaban was possibly beneficial, but was too costly. His financial position is still further embarrassed by his exclusion from the position of a British subject. The caste question has been dropt, but whether his numerous Bengalee employees will not induce him to-reopen it as soon as he has money is still likely.

The loss of the cotton crop I do not attribute entirely to weather, but much more to the intrigues of the Maharajah's servants to obtain a monopoly. Mr. Larminie's attempt to trade in cotton was followed by his removal from service on other ostensible grounds, but the main spring was cotton.

The immigration of Mugs in large numbers into Hill Tipperah is probably due to caprice. They will most probably migrate back again to Chittagong as soon as the Maharajah's people demand the family tax from them, but it is not taxes alone which deter people from setting in the Maharajah's territory : it is want of security of property and in the performance of trade or other contracts. Due encouragement, as recommended by the Assistant Political Agent, is a vague term. It is interference with the immigrants which, with or without grounds, creates suspicion and makes them return to British territory, where they are left alone.

The decline in the price of salt has followed the lower duty. This shows that this branch of trade is affected by healthy competition.

In the matter of trade tardy progress seems to be made, but the population of Hill Tipperah is too small to expect any considerable development is this direction.

Revenue from land ought to be more considerable.

In the appointment of Thakur Dhananjoy Deb, a member of his own family, to be chief officer of the State the Maharajah has done well, but the appointment of his Private Secretary, who is a Bengalee, has since been effected by the opposing faction, and I draw inferences of a future of intrigue (still prevalent) from the careful manner in which the Secretary's antecedents are kept out of sight, I have addressed the Assistant Political Agent on the subject.

With reference to paragraph 49, the Assistant Agent appears badly informed with reference to Mr. Larminie's removal from the managership. Mr. Larminie is no longer in the Maharajah's employment, but the final disruption of his engagement was brought about by an unfortunate (to use a mild expression) series of business transactions, in which neither party has esceped with impunity. My own impression is that the Bengalee party found Mr. Larminie no longer useful and the Maharajah was glad to get rid of him for as a zemindary manager he was not fitted, either by experience or patience. The management of the zemindaries of the Maharajh continues to be a bad example to all Tipperah. The Maharajah appears to be still encumbered with a number of useless, incompetent officers.

In paragraph 59 the system of farming sources of revenue is commented on. The Maharajah is compelled to farm much of his revenue, for if he collected through his own officers, he would get nothing. There has been no check hitherto exercised over the work of his subordinate officers.

There can be no doubt that the Maharajah's embarrassments are great. He is pressed for money on all sides; he has anticipated his income and financial statements, and good instruction will do little good. That there is some improvement in the collections made from zemindars is good. There was room for improvement, and there is still for very great improvement. That the Maharajah should receive a lakh of rupees profit only from Chuckla Roshanabad, when the zemindary still is, or could easily be made, over six lakhs, the road cess valuation being about eight lakhs, reflects infinite discredit on all connected with it.

With reference to paragraph 71, I do not see why the forest Department defers payments. A representation will be made on the subject, after inquiry.

With reference to crime, criminal justice, and the police, I do not agree with the Assistant Political Agent. It appears there were 618 cases and 707 persons implicated. This, in a population of something less than 100,000 souls, is considerable.

Paragraph 81. - The chief difficulty in working the Extradition Act is the migratory character of the British subjects who frequent Hill Tipperah. Warrants are issued, but the parties at whose instance they are issued seldom help the police.

paragraph 89. - The road to Agartala is complete as far as the embankment goes, but it is unbridged, and as far as I remember, it is extremely rough.

The boundaries are not sufficiently marked. Wooden posts standing in dense jungle are of little use. Possibly in the future it will be worthwhile making a trench and bank and a cleared neutral space on either side, similar to that along the Nepal Terai.

The Assistant Political Agent, Baboo Umakant Das, has performed his duties to my satisfaction. The influence, for good, which he exercises over the Maharajah seems powerless when brought to bear on his Bengalee officers. These, having to share authority with the Tipperahs, are discontented, and many talk of leaving the Maharajh's service. It will be a good thing if they do, for they neither understand the people, nor have been able to overcome their jealousy.

No. 216, dated Agartala, the 20th June 1883
From - BABOO UMAKANT DAS, Assistant Political Agent of Hill Tipperah,
To - The Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah.

I have the honour to submit the annual administration report of the Political Agency of Hill Tipperah for the year 1882-83. This time the Maharajah's office was able to furnish its returns and statements sooner than before, though not quite as soon as desired. Its revenue return, which, as usual, came in last, was received only ten days age.

NOTABLE EVENTS.

2. Some of the principal events of the year were most unhappy. In July last the Maharajah's first wife - the

Bara Iswari as she was called - died. Her loss was deeply mourned by all. She was a sensible lady, who used to exercise a beneficial influence upon the Maharajah, especially in matters of household expenses.

3. The above misfortune was soon followed by another of its kind, viz. the untimely deeth, in September last, of Thakur Dina Bandhu, Deputy Nazir Saheb, the late Prime Minister of the State. Though somewhat feeble, Thakur Dina Bandhu was generally a well-meaning adviser of the Maharajah, whose nephew and friend he was, and who therefore naturally felt much aggrieved on his death.

4. Being thus afflicted, the Maharajah, for a time, lost his spirits and health, and became rather incapable of carrying on the work of the administration. Under these circumstances I advised him to take a change. The advice was supported by his medical attendant, and accepted by him.

5. It was at first settled that he should proceed as far as Monghyr. But subsequently he changed his plans, and determined to visit Brindaban, which he did. On his way to and from the place he passed by Calcutta, where on each occasion, he stayed for a few days. His first entry into the metropolis was of a private character, for being then out of spirits and out of health, he naturally wished to have quiet and rest. His return journey, however, was formally announced to government in time, and he was received with honours due to his rank. On this occasion he paid his visits to His Excellency the Governor-General of India, and to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

6. The above noted trip marks an era in the annals of the State, as on no previous occasion was anything of the kind done by any of its rulers. It benefited the Maharajah greatly, for he returned quite restored to health and spirits. His two young sons, the Bara Thakur and his younger brother, who accompanied him, were also benefited by it, as it afforded them an opportunity, of which they made proper use, to see and know much of the world outside the limits of their own territory, and thereby to enlarge their minds.

7. Another event in the history of the last year is the order of the Hon'ble High Court dismissing, on the ground of want of jurisdiction, the case of Kumar Nabadwip Chandra Deb. The matter has already been separately reported on in connection with the Maharajhs' application about the appointment of an agent under section 432 of the Civil Procedure Code. It is not known whether Kumar Nabadwip Chandra will take any further steps in regard to the subject of his claims.

8. The agitation about the caste question, mentioned in the last annual report, was kept up throughout the year under review. But this year it concerned more the people of Vikrampore, in Dacca, than those of Hill Tipperah, or the district of Tipperah. The Maharajah has been a great loser by it, both in money and in name. I frequently advised him to desist from incurring any expenditure upon it, and I am glad to be able to report that he has at last seen the necessity of following the advice. He has already expressed his wish not to spend any more money on this account.

ANNUAL TOURS.

9. During the year under report the Commissioner and yourself visited Agartala in the month of March, and your predecessor visited it in December.

10. I was out on tour for 93 days of the year, and saw a number of the Maharajah's institutions in the interior, viz. jails, schools, dispensaries, as well as sub-divisional offices, police stations, frontier outposts, and forest-

toll stations. I also saw a number of hill villages and other places. No complaint of any kind was made to me, either by the subjects of the State or by others, when I was in their midst at their own places - a circumstance which shows that everything was getting on as it should. The people were apparently satisfied with their condition. The working of the different classes of the institutions will be shown below separately.

11. The magisterial officers of the State have well nigh adopted the practice of moving amongst the people in the cold weather. All of the four such officers of Agartala, Udaipur, Kailashar, and Bilania, more or less, moved in their respective jurisdiction during the winter. The Sub-Divisional Officers of Udaipur and Bilania traveled with me, each for a time. The movements of these officers are much appreciated and desired by the people.

12. The chief executives of the State find little opportunity to go in camp, as they have more or less to do with the management of the Maharajah's domestic affairs, which almost constantly require their presence in Agartala. It is desirable that they should occasionally go out and see the condition of the people and the working of the administration. I have suggested this point to the Prime Minister.

STATE OF WEATHER AND CROPS.

13. During the year the state of weather was not very good. The rainy season commenced earlier and ended later than usual. This was injurious alike to public health and to cultivation. For a few days between September and October the weather was particularly rainy and windy, causing mischief to cotton, which was then nearly ripe.

14. A comparative statement showing the actual quantities of rainfall at Agartala during the last two years, and the average of the next preceding three years, is given below :

Months	Average fall for the three years 1878-79, 1879-80 and 1880-81	Fall in 1881-82	Fall in 1882-83
April	2.37	2.75	5.07
May	11.54	8.78	13.23
June	14.50	13.48	17.39
July	12.70	10.47	11.15
August	11.68	13.63	14.25
September	13.75	18.68	10.89
October	7.27	2.89	7.85
November	0.90	.26	2.07
December	0.35	....	.45
January	0.22	1.15	....
February	1.36	1.16	....
March	6.50	6.65	1.40
Total	83.14	79.90	83.75

15. The state of weather, as said before, was not favorable to cultivation. But nevertheless the principal food crops, viz. rice, oil-seeds, chilies, &c., faired pretty well. Indeed, oil-seeds are said to have been gathered plentifully, and the yield of each of the other crops was not less than the average.

16. But the case was not so with regard to cotton, which was most seriously damaged by the rains. As usual, it was nearly ripe by the end of September, when the continuous fall of rain for some days, attended with high winds, reduced the capsules to a state of rottenness, and thereby injured their contents. The yield of cotton in consequence was only about half of the average of ordinary years.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

17. The year was not so healthy as its immediate predecessors. Cases of small-pox, fever, and diarrhoea occurred in several places, but happily the amount of mortality was not great.

18. The people in general are well contented with their condition. With a few exceptions, they are all of the lower orders of society. Their respect for the rule of the State is great, whose word they obey with pride and pleasure. But they are unlettered and ignorant, and it seems that their ignorance is the source of all their bliss.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE

19. As usual, there was no noticeable movement among the inhabitants of the plains. The hill people moved in the way in which they generally move in quest of good joom lands. But these people, as stated in former reports, are half nomads, whose settlements deserve to be viewed more as temporary encampments than as settled villages.

20. As already specially reported, a considerable number of Mugs, inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, immigrated into the State during the year, and settled in the Bilania sub-division. Since the last few years some Mugs are every winter coming to Hill Tipperah for settlement, after a short stay, going back to their own country. But this time the immigrants have come in pretty large numbers, and with the intention, it seems, of making permanent settlements here.

21. There are large tracts of good joom lands in the Maharajah's territory along the side of the Feni, which hold out no little temptation to the jooming population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where such lands are comparatively scarce. Indeed, were it not for the existence in Hill Tipperah of a tax on cotton, in addition to a high rate of family tax, a considerable portion of the population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, who live along the side of the Feni, would long age have come across the river and settled in the Maharajah's dominions.

22. Some of the people of Sylhet, who had come to settle in Dharmanagar, as reported last year, have gone back to their former places, owing, it is said, to want of good drinking water in the parts which were assigned to them. If due encouragement were shown to immigrants, the State might easily obtain a great influx of population in every side, as extensive tracts of cultivable and habitable lands are lying unoccupied in all directions in the country.

PRICES OF FOOD AND LABOUR

23. The following is a comparative statement of the prices of the chief articles of food which prevailed during the last two years, and of the average prices of the next preceding three years, one of which, viz. 1878-79, was a year of scarcity :

NAME OF ARTICLES	Average price for the three years 1878-79 1879-80 and 1880-81			Price in 1881-82			Price in 1882-83		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice, best sort	3	6	0	1	9	0	1	10	0
Rice, common	2	6	0	1	2	0	1	4	0
Wheat	4	12	0	3	12	0	3	14	0
Gram	4	10	0	3	0	0	2	12	0
Salt	5	0	0	5	0	0	3	12	0

24. It will be seen from the above that, except in salt, the prices of other articles varied but slightly in the last two years.

The falling off in the price of salt is attributable to the Supreme Government orders reducing the rate of duty paid on the article. These orders having come into force late in 1881-82. did not much affect the salt market during that year.

25. Owing to demands from outside, the price of rice has of late somewhat risen - a circumstance which is calculated to be beneficial to the subjects of the State, who are generally sellers, and not buyers of the article. Free exportation of rice was not formerly used to be allowed by the administration. On the advice of the Agency office in 1877, the Maharajah issued orders removing the restrictions which were in force on the subject. These orders have since then been always duly observed.

26. There was no noticeable change in the prices of labour during the year. They were on the whole, the same as before, viz. :

Skiled labour	Common mason, carpenter, blacksmith	On the average Rs. 13 per month per man.
Daily or agricultural labour		On the average Rs. 7-8 per month per man
Syces		On the average Rs. 6 per month per man

27. As stated in previous reports, the number of resident labourers is very limited. In the plains work is chiefly done by imported labour. In the hills a system of impressment of labour prevails, by which every village, on the occasion of necessity, has to furnish to the State a portion of the labour required by it. When its troops or officers march through the hills the villagers have to supply them with luggage-bearers, who are locally called Tythungs, and who, as a rule, are changed in every village lying on or near the line of march. Females as well as males serve as Tythungs.

28. Skilled labourers are all British subjects, who come from different places to work for hire, and whose charges therefore are generally high. Some of the Reangs can construct dugouts, and some of the Manipuris can work in brass and ivory. But there is no class of professional artisan amongst them. Every carpenter, smith,

or mason has to be brought from the adjacent British territory.

MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

29. Among the manufactures of the country may be named some of the cotton fabrics which the hill people make for their own use, viz. poeris (cotton rugs), parches (cotton sheets), phanik (a wearing apparel), and also breast-cloths, waist-cloths, &c.

30. Poeris are made by the Kukis, parches by the Tipperahs and Manipuris, and phaniak by the Manipuris only. The other kinds of cloths are made by all classes of the hill people, and are differently named by the different tribes.

31. The only other manufactures which could be named in addition to the above are the dug-outs made by the Reangs, and the bamboo baskets and bamboo mats made by the Tipperahs. No earthen or metallic work of any kind is known to be manufactured by the natives. Even the daos(knives) which are so constantly required by the Tipperahs for their daily use are made for them by the Bengalee smiths, who are all British subjects.

32. I have always considered it likely that the hills may contain mines of some kinds or other. It has now been discovered that a coal mine exists not far from the Khojai, in the Kailashar Division. The coal found is reported to be of good quality. No arrangement, however, has as yet been made to work the mine. But as its situation is close to a stream which remains navigable for a considerable portion of the year, there will be no great difficulty in making arrangements for its working. On the opening of the proposed railway through Tipperah and Sylhet the mine is expected to be of great use.

33. Besides the above, coal may be found in other places in the Kalashar Division. But the difficulty and expenses of getting the same down into the plain country are so great that no step is taken by the administration in the direction.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

34. The trade of the State is entirely in the hands of the British subjects, who are mostly inhabitants of the adjacent districts of Noakholly, Tipperah, and Sylhet, and who enjoy perfect freedom in carrying on their business, and are always treated with consideration by the Government of the country.

35. The following is a list of the exports of the country : Cotton, oil-seeds, timber, an other forest produce, and also dug-outs, garjan-oil; and honey, as well as elephants, parrots, and other singing birds. The imports are all sorts of manufactured things, including excisable and other dutiable articles, which are imported under proper licenses. Dried fish, which is in much use in the State, is largely imported from Tipperah and Sylhet.

36. There is no import duty of any kind payable by the tradesmen : But an export duty is levied on various articles, the chief of which is cotton, which, as said in previous reports, yields to the State, in good years, nearly half of its entire revenue from all sources. This duty is paid by the exporters. Its rates are different for different articles, the average being about 25 per cent ad valorem. The entire value of the export trade for the last year is estimated at Rs. 5,60,180.

37. The forest produce exported from the State is chiefly floated down the rivers. A portion, however, is

carried by men on their shoulders. These men are all British borderers, who, as a rule, do not stay in the hills longer than a day at a time. They pay to the farmers 6 annas to 8 annas per head per year for the privilege of working in the forest and taking away such things as may be carried on shoulders.

38. I have said before that no import duty of any kind is levied in the State. But tradesmen who wish to sell imported things to the hill people, and take from them cotton in return, are to pay permit fees, which are levied in the case of shoulder-borne trade at the rate of 1 rupee per dealer per annum all round, and in the case of river-borne trade at from Rs. 2 to Rs. 30 a trader a year, according to the length for which the river may be navigable, and other local circumstances. The former tradesman is called a chuari, and the latter a bepari.

39. On the whole the state of trade in the country is steadily improving, owing, on the one hand, to the increased feeling of security which tradesmen, who, as said before, are all British subjects, are showing in respect of their persons and property; and on the other to increased prosperity of the people, resulting partly from continued good harvests, and partly from the absence of any Lushai inroad during the last few years.

40. It is expected that the resources of the country, particularly its trade, will be largely developed by the proposed railway between Bengal and Assam, which is to pass by the borders of the State.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING ON GENERAL AND SPECIAL SUBJECTS.

41. Many of the Thakurs and a portion of the State officers were latterly discontented with the manner of carrying on the movement about the caste question, by which not only presents and bonuses had frequently to be given to the pundits and others of Vikrampore without any adequate return, but their own name and rank had, to a great extent, to be simultaneously lowered in the estimation of the people in general. The wish which the Maharajah has recently expressed for discontinuing the incurrence of any further expenditure about the matter has therefore given satisfaction alike to his own people and to his other well-wishers.

42. The Maharajah's journey to Brindaban has given unmixed satisfaction to all classes of his subjects, who look upon the event with pride, viewing it more as a religious undertaking than anything else. A large number of the Maharajah's subjects are Vaishnavas, with whom Brindaban is a most holy place, and a trip to it is considered by them as a great pilgrimage.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

43. During the Maharajah's absence in Calcutta and Brindaban the work of the administration was done by a Council of Regency with the Jubraj as its President, and some of the chief officials and Thakurs of Agartala as members. The arrangement was made in consultation with this office, and I am able to report that it worked well.

44. The proposal I made some time age for opening a small magisterial office at Bilania was carried out during the year under report. A Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector, with powers of a Munsif, has been stationed at the place with a small establishment. The office was opened in July last. It is believed that it will be of great benefit to the people in that outlying part of the country. Financially, it is hoped to be able to bring in more to the Maharajah's treasury than it will take from it to meet its charges. For it will not only realize a considerable amount of fees and fines, &c., but is expected also to lead to the permanent increase of land revenue and forest revenue in its jurisdiction.

45. The appointment of a District Superintendent of Police, which was created the year before last, has, since the death of its incumbent, been abolished. The Maharajah has shown prudence in his action in this matter. The office, as reported last year, was an unnecessary one. The magistrate of Agartala is now doing its work in addition to his other duties, and doing it without any inconvenience.

46. Owing to his domestic misfortunes, and this trip to the North-Western Provinces, which occupied nearly three months, the Maharajah was unable to personally take any great part in the work of administration during the year. Trained and aged as he is, it is, I am afraid, rather too much to expect him to be able now to prove a strong and powerful ruler. It is therefore desirable, as reported in previous years, that the administration should be placed in the hands of a really capable and trustworthy officer, who should be vested with sufficient power to carry on the work.

47. The above matter frequently formed the subject of conversation between the Maharajah and myself during the year. Lately he considered the matter earnestly, and appointed a Prime Minister in the place of the late Nazir Saheb. The new Prime Minister, Thakur Dhananjoy Deb, is an intelligent and promising young man. He was formerly Sub-Divisional Officer of Udaipur, and lately member of the Council of Regency alluded to above. His appointment has given satisfaction to all concerned.

48. The Maharajah has also appointed a Secretary, through whom ordinarily all papers and records are to go to him. The post of a Secretary is a new creation in the administration, and it is not known what inconvenience was felt without it. But as the officer selected to hold the post was already in the Maharajah's service, his new appointment has not entailed any additional cost upon the State.

49. No successor to the manager of the Maharajah's zemindaries in British territory, who was dismissed last year, has yet been appointed. The actual necessity of the post of a separate mannager, in addition to a Dewan and a Naib Dewan, is doubted by the Durbar, so nothing is likely to be done in the direction as long as the new Prime Minister has not had full opportunity to get a sufficient knowledge of the actual state of things in the zemindaries. It would be well if a competent manager were appointed.

50. The Cotton Superintendent and the Settlement Officer of Nurnagar, in Tipperah, who were appointed the year before last, continue in their posts without being able to show any satisfactory return of work done. The success of an officer having direct connection with Agartala depends more upon the way in which he gets help and support from the Durbar than upon his own aptitude and fitness for work. The manner in which the new Prime Minister may arrange to get work done by the subordinate officers remains yet to be seen.

STATISTICAL ENQUIRIES

51. No special enquiry of any kind was undertaken by the State during the year for the purpose of collecting statistics. It is not known if any such enquiry was ever made before, except on the occasion of taking the census in February 1881.

52. During the Dasarah time the heads of hill villages are invited to Agartala for the purpose of settling the amount of family tax to be paid by each village during the year. In the meetings which take place on the occasion a good deal of statistical information is collected by the revenue officers. The number of population in each village, the number who are capable of conducting joom work, the number who are infirm and unmarried, the number who are widows and widowers, &c., &c., are all enquired into. Similarly, enquire is

made about the quantity and kinds of crops reaped in the jooms in the year, and also about the state of public health in the hills. But the enquiries are made rather in a cursory way, and only for the purpose of settling the revenue, the unmarried, the infirm, the widows, and widowers being exempted, under the custom of the country, from paying any family tax. Enquiries of this kind and for this purpose were made during the year under report.

53. The farmers of forest revenue have instruc ions to furnish to the administration returns of the various kinds of hill produce floated down the rivers, on which export duties have been collected. But I am afraid, under the former *regime*, the returns were neither regularly received, nor properly used, and it is too soon now to say to what good account they may be turned by present Prime Minister.

GENERAL STATE OF THE POLICE, CRIME, AND CIVIL JUSTICE

54. The state of the police force is same as before. In numerical strength it is quite sufficient for every requirement. In merit it is just what could be expected from the moderate pay given to it. Darogahs, as a rule, receive from Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a month, two or three officers only getting the highest pay in the department, viz. Rs. 30 per mensem. The distribution of pay, again, is not made as regularly as may be desired, though the practice reported last year, of officers appropriating to themselves, without authority, such portions of the Government money in their hands as may be equal to the amount of their pay, has been ordered to be checked.

55. The police are located along the borders, where the bulk of the population are Bengalee-Mahomedans of the lower classes, who are generally more apt to commit crimes than the hill tribes. Owing to the protection and encouragement given by the police officers stationed along the borders, cultivation is extending towards the edge of the hills, and with it population also is gradually increasing.

56. There is no proper system of village-watch in all parts of the State, chowkidars being appointed only in the head-quarters stations, and in some of the villages of the Kailashar Division. But it is the bounden duty of every village headman to report crime to the neighbouring police station, and to help its officers in preserving the public peace.

57. Though, owing to the establishment of a new sub-divisional office, the amount of reported crime showed an increase, it was, on the whole, small, as will be noticed in detail hereafter, Nor its character was in general heinous. Crime is always small in the State, because the population is small, and because for that reason no offender of the land can easily remain long undetected, and also because the people, though on the whole poor, have, by means of agriculture, all their immediate wants easily supplied. Agriculture and crime are seldom practised together.

58. The tone of the courts of justice in the country is steadily improving. All the superior Judges and Magistrates are Thakurs, i. e., persons of the same tribe with the ruling family. They are not generally possessed of liberal education, but are well conversant with the rules, manners, and customs of the country. They follow the procedure in vogue in British courts, and are assisted by pleaders. These Thakur Judges are not paid for their work, as they and their families are dependents upon the Maharajah and are maintained by him. They work for the sake of love and name. The Sub-Divisional Magistrates are salaried officers, who are possessed of tolerable education, and who are all Bengalees. The courts are gradually gaining more confidence of the people.

ADMINISTRATION OF REVENUE.

59. The Maharajah has often betrayed weakness and want of purpose and determination in matters in which his revenue has been concerned. Under an able, and strong Government the revenue now collected by the State might be largely increased, not only by opening new sources of income, but also by using those already in existence with more firmness and greater discretion. To cite an instance, under the present arrangement a considerable portion of the land revenue and the whole of the forest revenue are collected through farmers who are either related with the Maharajah or are his dependents and favourites. The revenue which they pay to the State is often collected by them through sub-lessees, who are mostly British subjects, and who, without benefiting the State in any manner, carry away a considerable portion of its revenue.

60. In defence of the above arrangement, it is sometimes said that the farmers and sub-farmers materially help the administration by paying down, without objection, advances of revenue in times of need. Such advances were paid by them during the year on the occasion of the Maharajah's journey to the North-Western Provinces, when some of them paid down a full year's revenue in advance. But this way of getting advances is more an evil than a good. For on the one hand, it tends to increase the powers of the farmers, which, in the interests of the subjects, is not at all desirable; and on the other it curtails the resources of the administration for the year for which the advances are taken. It would be well it direct management were introduced in the place of this farming system.

61. In one great respect a redeeming sign is clearly perceived. The overgrown establishments are being revised with a view to reduction. The German artist and the Associate Minister, who, as reported last year, were unnecessary, have been done away with. The Niz Thabil Dewan - Dewan of the Privy Purse - has been pensioned off. The homeopathy practitioner, who was retained in addition to number of allopathic doctors and native physicians, has been dismissed. The music-master, who is dead, is to have no successor. The entire amount of saving from these reductions, &c., would be over Rs. 20,000 a year.

62. Besides the above, other reductions are in contemplation. On the appointment of the new Prime Minister, I pointed out to the Maharajah, as already reported to you at the time, the urgent necessity for reforming his administration of revenue, and in that view suggested that the entire collection and management expenses of the zemindaries may not exceed 15 percent. of the gross collections; that the administration charges of the State may not exceed 40 percent of its income; and that the sum of the balances, minus the saddar revenue for the zemindaries, may be expended thus : Seventy five percent for the Maharajah's household and private expenses, and 25 percent for liquidating debts and for works of reform. These suggestions were adopted in full, and the Prime Minister was directed to prepare a financial statement accordingly. The statement, I hear, is already drawn up and laid before the Maharajah for his consideration.

63. During the year I availed myself of every opportunity to impress upon the Maharajah and his principal officers the absolute necessity for reducing expenditure and developing the sources of revenue. The Maharajah on one occasion said, and I believe said with truth, that the present difficulties would never have arisen if the civil suits instituted by Nil Krishna and Kumar Nabadwip Chandra had not drained the resources of the State in the way they did. Now that these suits are over, it can be hoped that the finances will era long be placed in a satisfactory condition. The movement about the caste question and the Maharajah's trip to Brindaban added, in not a small degree, to the embarrassments of the State.

64. The total income of the State during the year from all sources was Rs.. 2,29,961, which is less than the entire receipts of the previous year by Rs. 7,828, and more than the average of the next preceding three years by Rs. 20,486. Indeed, were it not for a considerable decrease in the amount of duty derived from cotton, owing to insufficient produce of the crop, the revenue return would have shown a substantial increase. The revenue of the State is steadily increasing since 1872, when the first enquiry on the subject was made by this office after its establishment. In that year the revenue was reported to be Rs. 1,45,000 only, which shows that in 11 years the increase has come up to Rs. 84,961, or at the rate of Rs. 7,723 a year on the average.

65. There was some improvement in the collection made in the zemindaries. Some debts were cleared, while fresh debts were not incurred as largely as before; nor those that were incurred were wanted so much for purposes of the zemindaries as for other objects, such as the High Court appeal in the matter of Kumar Nabadwip Chandra's suit, the Maharajah's trip to Brindaban, and the movement about the caste question. The State, on the average, gets about a lakh of rupees out of the zemindary collections. Of this a small portion only is obtained in cash, the rest being disbursed by the zemindary officers in accordance to the Maharajah's orders.

66. A considerable portion of the Balishira hills, in the Maharajah's zemindaries, in Sylhet, were settled during the year with Messrs. Finaly, Muir and Co. of Calcutta, who wanted the lands for cultivation of tea. The settlement brought in a lakh of rupees in a lump as nazarana, half of which was devoted to payment of debts. The transaction, however, has not been altogether favourable to the State, for a very low rate of annual rent has been fixed per acre, and the company has been given the choice of selecting their ands from any part of the hills - an arrangement by which the best portion of the hills will be taken up by them, and other speculators of the kind will thereby be prevented from coming in.

67. The accompanying revenue statement contains, as usual, figures representing the actual receipt only. An analysis of this statement is given below. No return of expenditure has been received from the Maharajah's office which states that it is inconvenient for it to furnish such a return. A separate report will be submitted on the subject.

68. Land revenue from plain lands. -- This is one of the chief sources of revenue. The amount collected under this head during the year was Rs. 29,394 against Rs. 34,717 of the previous year, and Rs. 34,611 the average of the next preceding three years. The decrease of Rs. 5,323 is chiefly owing to the fact that in the Udaipur Division a new settlement of land revenue have been commenced, and many of the tenants have not paid in their rents pending the completion of the settlements.

69. *Family tax in the hills.* - Realization under this head was satisfactory, rising from Rs. 17,987 in the previous year to Rs. 24,224 in the year under report, and thus showing an increase of Rs. 6,237. This is said to be owing to the collection of a large amount of arrears. The tax is levied under khas management at the rates of from Rs. 3 to Rs. 8 per family.

70. *Tax on forest produce* - The collection under this head also was satisfactory, but not to the degree shown by the figures given in the return. The amount of Rs. 48,594, which shows an increase of Rs. 5,464 over the receipt of the previous year, represents the collection of duties on forest produce exported, and also that of rent on chukholas, which formerly was used to be shown under a separate head, and which in the previous year amounted to Rs. 2,096. The increased collection of duties is said to be owing to the exertions of the collecting officers.

71. *Tolls on forest produce floated down the Feni.* - Under an agreement these tolls are collected by the Government Forest Department, and five-eighths of them are paid to the Maharajah. The payments, as remarked by your predecessor last year, are not made very punctually. The amount due to the Maharajah on account of the collection of the year under report remain yet unpaid. The sum shown in the statement as receipt of the year was due for the preceding year. The apparent decrease of Rs. 4,423 is owing to the fact that in 1880-81 two years' revenue had been received together. Were it not for this, some increase would have been seen under this head also. With the Feni tolls the entire forest revenue of the State was Rs. 55,404, which is over 24 per cent of the entire receipts from all sources.

72. *Tax on cotton and oil-seeds.* - This is the largest source of the income of the State. The receipt under this head, though smaller than before, amounted to nearly 37 percent of the entire revenue of the year. The decrease of Rs. 14,935 is owing to the failure of the crop, of which, however, it is not an exact measure, as a considerable portion of the receipt was derived from the undisposed of cotton of the previous year. The rates of duty were the same as reported last year, viz. Rs. 4-12 and Rs. 2, and Rs. 1-8 on every maund of cleaned cotton, uncleaned cotton, and oil-seeds respectively.

73. *Royalty on elephants caught.* - This is also an importatn source of revenue. But unfortunately it is not under proper management. Farms are given to unsuitable persons, who cannot carry on the khedda work with success. During the year 25 elephants only were caught, against 51 of the previous year. As to receipt for royalty, however, there was an increase of Rs. 4,486 which was due to collection of arrears.

74. Of the minor heads of revenue, chuna-sikar has been abolished. It was a disagreeable tax levied by a farmer, who had the monopoly of selling in the Agartala bazar chuna (lime) and siker (a sort of sweetmeat). The monopoly has been justly done away with, and free trade in the articles has been allowed in its stead. The decrease under the head of buffalo-grazing mehal is said to be owing to murrain which occurred in Rudi Jala, the largest mehal of the kind in the State. Kazai mehal is now under khas management, and the increase of Rs. 252, which it yielded, is ascribed to more careful work of the officers. It seems that in courts of justice punishment by fine was more resorted to than before, hence is the increase of Rs. 1,256 under the head of "Law and Justice - Fines." The increases under the heads of stamp and court-fees and registration are due to the renewal and registration of a number of Bankar and other leases. The increases under Akkari and Adda are said to be owing to collection of arrears. No receipt under the head of "chan khola" has been shown in the return, as it has been included in the amount stated as "tax on forest produce." The fluctuations under the other heads are not striking.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

75. As said in previous reports, the administration of justice is chiefly in the hands of some of the Thakurs of Agartala, who generally do their work under the light of the laws and rules in force in British territory. The amount of work done in the various courts during the year is shown in the accompanying judicial returns Nos. 1 to 9, of which the following is an analysis.

76. *(1) Statement of cases investigated by the police.* - Of the 174 cases instituted, 158 only were enquired into during the year, and of the 160 persons brought to court, 127 only were tried, of whom 83, or 65 percent, were convicted. The majority of the cases related to minor offences against property.

77. *(2) Statement of criminal cases.* - This return shows the entire number of criminal cases of all kinds which

occurred during the year, and also the manner in which they were disposed of. Owing to the establishment of a new sub-divisional court at Bilania, the number of cases increased from 517 to 618. The number of serious cases, as usual, was small, being only about nine per cent of the whole. Compared with the previous year's return, the number of murder cases shows a slight decrease, the figures for the two years being, nine and seven respectively. Of the 19 persons tried for the offence of murder, nine only were convicted, but none were found deserving of capital punishment. On the whole 303 cases, with 707 persons, were tried during the year, viz. 34 serious and 163 minor cases of offences against property and person, and 106 miscellaneous cases. Of the 707 persons tried, 61 were concerned in serious and 391 in minor cases of offences against property and person, and the remaining 255 were implicated in miscellaneous cases. Of these, 38 of the first, 245 of the second, and 189 of the third group, that is, in all 472, or 66.2 percent. were convicted.

78. *(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in criminal cases.* - Of the 472 persons convicted during the year as shown in the above mentioned return, 65, or nearly 14 percent, appealed against the sentences they had received. In 28 cases (including those that had remained pending from the previous year) the appeals were wholly or partially successful, in 25 cases no result was produced, and 15 cases remained pending at the close of the year. The work in the khas appellate court was, as usual, small, Of the 10 appeals preferred before it during the year, six were wholly or partially successful, two were unsuccessful, and two remained pending at the end of the year.

79. *(4) Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned.* - Compared with the return submitted last year, this statement shows a considerable increase, as well in the number of cases as in that of the persons brought to trial. The former rose from 135 to 182, and the latter from 234 to 257. This is owing to the fact that British subjects now visit the State more freely than before. Of the total number tried, 66.85 percent were convicted and punished.

80. *(5 & 6) Statement of cases under the Extradition Act.* - During the year 27 persons had to be brought in under the extradition law. Of these, five only were arrested and made over to the State, one surrendered himself to the Maharajah's court of his own accord, two were reported to have died, one against the remaining 19 warrants remained unexecuted. Of seven cases in which warrants were applied for by the Maharajah's office, one only was found proper to be certified for trial in British territory. The other certified case shown in the return is the case of the murder of Tina Gazi a British subject, in which complaint was lodged in Tipperah.

81. *(7 & 7a.) Statement of civil suits.* - The suits were generally of small value. Their number increased from 236 to 246, but their value decreased from Rs. 22,836-5-10 to Rs. 14,866-1-8. The average value of each suit therefore was Rs. 60-6-11, against Rs. 96-12-2 of the previous year. Out of 298 suits which came up for disposal before the four courts of the State, 207 only were disposed of, i. e., 51.75 per court on the average. The total amount of stamp fees realized on account of these suits was Rs. 2,183-8.

82. *(8) Statement showing the result of appeals in civil suits.* - Out of 35 cases of appeals, 14 only were disposed of during the year, and 21 remained pending - a result which is not creditable to the Judge. The khas appellate court decided 17 cases out of 18 that came up before it. This last-mentioned court is presided over by the Jubraj.

83. *(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subjects were concerned.* - As Reported last year, suits against British subjects, who have no property in the State, are generally of little use to the plaintiffs, for they cannot

take out any execution in British territory. Hence the number of such suits is usually small. During the year the number feel from 20 to 8, while suits in which British subjects were plaintiffs increased from 49 to 72.

JAILS.

84. There are four small jails in the State - one at Agartala, and one in each of the three sub-divisions of Sonamura, Bilania, and Kailashar. In all of them, at the close of the year, there were only 53 prisoners, whose average daily total number was 46.4, or 11.22 per jail.

85. Owing to their small number the prisoners cannot earn as much as they cost. They are chiefly employed in out-door work -- making or repairing roads, clearing jungle, building thatched houses, and making bricks. Some are employed in making carpets and cane chairs. They are always treated with lenity and care.

MILITARY AND FRONTIER MATTERS.

86. There was no disturbance of any kind in the State during the year. Indeed, since the Lushai expedition in 1871-72, the State is enjoying perfect freedom from raids by the wild tribes of the east. The word Lushai, however, is still a terror to the natives who in the winter live, more or less, in a state of unrest and anxiety, and are liable to be excited by the slightest cause.

87. The several frontier guard posts of the State were duly maintained in the year. I inspected the posts at Chirakuti, Eksari, and Udaipur, and found them to be in pretty good order. The Maharajah has consented to remove the Eksari post to the banks of the Sima, in order that it may be able to conveniently carry on patrol communication with the frontier police of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where an advanced guard is proposed to be established for the purpose. On its removal, however, an extensive tract of the Maharajah's territory will be left unprotected, and measures will therefore have to be adopted by the State to ensure its safety.

88. From each of the guard posts detachments, from time to time, in the raiding season, were sent out to move round and give reassurance to the people, and also to keep communication with the several chour chaukis (secret posts) which are established far in the interior of the hills, and in which, according to the custom of the country, the hill people themselves keep watch.

STATE OF COMMUNICATION.

89. That portion of the Agartala to Kasba road which lies within the State, and which is about three miles in length, was completed during the year. The road between old Agartala and new about four miles long, and also a few other roads in the stations, were repaired and raised.

90. In the interior of the State there are no high roads of any kind. But there are footpaths and elephant tracks everywhere, which pass, from village to village, hrough hills and forests, and used by the officers of the State, as well as by tradesmen or and others who have to transact any business in the hills. These pathways are generally more or less covered with jungle during the rains, which are cleared in the winter. They are locally called lahars,, and are sufficient for the present requirements of the country.

91. River communication also is available to some extent. The head-quarters stations of both Udaipur and Kailashar Divisions are situated on the banks of streams which are navigable by country boats throughout the year, and of which officers of the State, as well as others, avail themselves largely. The newly established sub-

divisional office of Bilania is similarly situated on the side of a river. All the military outposts, and a number of police stations and bazars, are on or near the banks of streams, by which supplies are taken to them from the plain lands with facility.

EDUCATION

92. Excepting the two sub-divisional schools of Sonamara and Kailashar, the rest of the schools of the State are not so improving as they should. This is owing more to want of regularity in the payment of the teachers' bills than to any other cause. The Kailashar and Sonamara schools are immediately before the eyes of the Sub-Divisional Officers, who take interest in them.

93. The entire number of schools, as will be seen from the annexed return on the subject, was 31, with 692 students, against 27 schools and 609 students of the preceding year. The number of girls, as wells the number of students belonging to the hill tribes, are increasing. This is satisfactory.

94. None of the Maharajah's sons attend any of the public schools. For them private tutors are employed. The Bara Thakur and his younger brother are prosecuting their studies with care. Both of them went with their father to Calcutta and Brindaban, and were benefited by the journey. It would be well if the Jubraj, who is the next heir to the Maharajah, could get some opportunity for traveling. Being over 21, he is now aged enough to be able to think and act for himself. It was once proposed that he should go out, but pecuniary difficulties stood in the way, and the proposal was abandoned. Both he and the Bara Thakur are desirous to visit Calcutta on the occasion of the coming exhibition. If necessary funds could be provided for it, they should, I think, be allowed to go.

DISPENSARIES.

95. There are only two regular dispensaries in the State, viz. those of new Agartala and Kailashar. Free medical aid, however, is given to the public at old Agartala, and also at Sonamara and Bilania, though no regular register of patients is kept at any of these places, except in Sonamara.

96. As shown by the annexed medical return, the number of patients treated fell from 7,711 to 4,327. This is owing to the fact that at old Agartala no account was kept of the patients treated there. Of the entire number of persons who came up for treatment, 93.25 per cent were cured or relieved. The prevailing diseases, as usual, were fever, diarrhoea, and rheumatic complaints. A few cases of small-pox and cholera occurred in some places in the hills, but fortunately the amount of mortality was nowhere great.

POST OFFICE

97. There is only one post office in the State, viz. the one connected with this Agency. Its work during the year was satisfactory. It has long since become a paying office, the income being more than double the amount of its charges. The Maharajah has in consequence been now entirely relieved of the monthly subsidy of Rs. 40, which formerly he used to pay for the maintenance of the office and of the postal line from here to Kasba.

98. There is no system of regular postal arrangement in the interior of the State. But dak-runners are attached to all the principal offices, who carry letters, &c., from office to office and from place to place, when necessary. During the year the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet proposed to have the Khambarghat post office of his district transfered to Kailashar in Hill Tipperah. The Durbar of Agartala, however, found it inconvenient to

carry out the proposal.

MISCELLANEOUS

99. During the year a long-standing question of the boundary between the State and Sylhet, which lies from Thal post to Torlengta, was settled. In accordance to the advice of Government, contained in its letter No. 340 PD, dated the 22nd September 1882 the Maharajah accepted the Kurti Gang as the limit of his State on that side, as had been proposed by the Administration of Assam.

100. The boundary posts between the State and British territory being generally at considerable distances from one another, and the intervening tracts being in most parts covered with jungle, the line of boundary is liable to be encroached upon by cultivators; but as the line is already definitely fixed, any question regarding it can be easily settled by surveying and laying it on the ground.

101. The clerk of this office, Baboo Gobind Chadra Das, performed his duties, throughout the year, satisfactorily, fully maintaining his character for honesty and efficiency.

Statement showing the amount of revenue derived from all sources in 1882-83.

Serial number.	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average receipts for the three years, 1878-79, 1879-80, 1880-81,	Receipts in whole rupees in 1881-82.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1882-83.	AS COMPARED WITH 1881-82.		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.	Land revenue from plain lands	34,611	34,717	29,394	....	5,323	
2.	Family tax in the hills	20,387	17,987	24,224	6,237	....	
3.	Tax on forest produce	37,807	43,130	48,594	5,464	....	
4.	Do. on the Fenny	4,528	11,233	6,810	....	4,423	
5.	Do on cotton and oil seeds	60,625	99,576	84,641	....	14,935	
6.	Royalty on elephants caught	18,742	5,076	9,562	4,486	....	
7.	Buffallo-grazing mehal	1,893	1,799	711	....	1,088	
8.	Khotagari mehal	1,326	2,074	1,915	....	159	
9.	Chuna-sikar mehal	76	76	....	....	76	
10.	Kazai (kaisfee) mehal	197	166	418	252	....	
11.	Rents on markets	681	645	651	6	....	
12.	Law and justice fines	3,574	2,199	3,455	1,256	....	
13.	Ditto Ditto stamp and court fee	7,347	7,815	7,954	139	....	
14.	Ditto ditto - process fees	925	1,361	1,406	45	....	
15.	Ditto ditto - cattle pounds	1,341	1,605	1,334	....	271	
16.	Ditto ditto - abkari (excise)	1,359	763	1,483	720	....	
17.	Nazars	3,372	898	895	....	3	
18.	Adda (chowkidari-tax) mehal	1,906	2,165	3,711	1,546	....	
19.	Chankhola (thatching-grass) mehal	2,401	2,096	....	....	2,096	
20.	Registration	1,610	1,164	1,595	431	....	
21.	Miscellaneous	4,767	1,244	1,208	....	36	
	Total	2,00,475	2,37,789	2,29,961	20,582	28,410	Decrease on the whole of Rs. 7,828

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR
1883-84

No. 276, dated Agartala, the 23rd June 1884.

From - Baboo Umakanta Das, Assistant Political Agent of Hill Tipperah,

To - The Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah.

I have the honour to submit the Annual General Administration Report of the Hill Tipperah Political Agency for the year 1883-84.

2. Like its predecessor, the year was uneventful as well as peaceful and prosperous. Excepting the joom crops in the Koylashar division, which were more or less destroyed by rats, the produce of the lands was quite sufficient for all local requirements, while public health was throughout the year good.

3. The prices of the chief articles of food except rice were moderate. Rice, which is the main diet of the subjects of the State, as it is of the inhabitants of Bengal proper, was sold at a somewhat higher rate than in the preceding years, owing to grater demand from outside the territory.

4. The long-standing family disputes mentioned in previous reports, which caused for so many years such pecuniary losses to the State, and such trouble and anxiety to the Maharajah personally, were amicably settled during the year under report, the Maharajah agreeing to pay for the maintenance of his nephew, Kumar Navadvip Chandra Deb Barman, who as reported last year, had lost his suit in the High Court. I had always previously advised the Maharajah to try to have an understanding with the Kumar, and when the latter, after having failed in the Court, came forward for a compromise, I ascertained his wishes in the matter, under your instructions, and communicated the same to the Maharajah, with a repetition of the advice for a settlement. The advice was thereupon accepted and carried out.

5. "The water question" reported in previous years has not yet been given up by the Maharajah, as it was expected to be. Failing to get a footing in the Hindu society abroad, his advisers in the matter, no doubt with his approval, are now engaged in turning the last stone at home. They have recently adopted the improper course of eliminating from the Maharajah's service all men who are not converts to their cause, and of filling up their places with those only who have become so converted. Thus many of the old and faithful servants of the State have had to leave the service, alike to its loss and to theirs.

6. Besides the changes which were made in the above way in the staff of officers and amla, no material alteration in the personnel of the administration took place during the year; nor, with the exception mentioned below, was there any important change in the mode of administration either.

7. The exception just referred to is the fact that the Maharajah has recently appointed an Executive Council consisting of seven members, who are to assemble twice a week to consider and dispose of matters relating to the administration of the State and the management of the zemindaries, the Prime Minister, who is also one of the members, having to carry out the resolutions of the Council, and when no resolutions are arrived at, owing to difference of opinion of the members or other reasons, to submit the matter to the Maharajah for orders. This arrangement has been somewhat derogatory to the Prime Minister, inasmuch as the majority of the members are his official subordinates, while the rest are mere relatives of, or dependents upon, the Maharajah.

8. The Secretary's office, the creation of which was reported last year, was in existence throughout the year under report, in which it gained strength by the appointment of new hands to its staff. It has not worked

satisfactorily. Being an unnecessary addition to the numerous steps already in existence through which correspondence has generally to pass on to the Maharajah, it serves only as a further cause of delay in the disposal of general business. The relation subsisting between this office and the Prime Minister's is not of the most friendly kind, as the latter has to submit all its reports, &c., to the Maharajah through the former, where they are liable to be examined and criticised. This anomaly, the indirect subordination of the Prime Minister to the Secretary, is harmful to the administration, as it is no doubt disagreeable to the Prime Minister, who besides being the appointed head of the executive of the State, is a principal Thakur of Agartala, while the Secretary is a stranger, having come from Vikrampur, in Dacca.

9. But the Maharajah, it seems, has not the fullest confidence in the Prime Minister, with whom in one matter at least he is not in terms of perfect agreement. That matter is the unprofitable "water question," of which the Prime Minister has always expressed proper disapprobation.

10. I have repeatedly pointed out to the Maharajah the urgent necessity for there being placed at the head of the Government a competent and reliable officer vested with due powers to carry on the administration. The Maharajah admits the necessity, but is slow in taking any steps to remove it. It seems to me that as long as his advisers and supporters in the caste movement will remain in power, no such officer is likely to be appointed.

11. The Prime Minister is a sensible person, who has acquired knowledge of the state of affairs; but he is powerless. In the matter of appointment and dismissal of officers, as in almost every other matter, his duty is only to report it to the Maharajah for orders -- an arrangement which causes accumulation of business in the Secretary's office, where things are generally disposed of in an incredibly long period.

12. Several questions in regard to the boundary between the State and the British territory arose during the year. As the boundary has already been defined and fixed jointly by agents of both the Governments, no question regarding it should now arise, unless the marks placed upon it are removed or destroyed, or unless the tracts lying between any two distant marks are wrongly held. In all such cases, however, as I have stated in my special reports on the subject, the questions can be easily settled by inspecting the spot and comparing it with the map and the arbitration award.

13. The finances are not in a satisfactory condition. Some of the principal sources of revenue are in the hands of persons connected with the Durbar, who hold them in farms on very low terms. These farmers, contenting themselves with some profit, grant subleases to outsiders, who are the principal gainers under the arrangement.

14. From most of the farmers alluded to above, and from others through whom revenue is collected, advances were taken to a considerable extent in 1882-83. The cotton revenue, which is always fluctuating, was comparatively small during the year under report owing to scanty produce of the crop; but, on the other hand, the expenses of the State continue to be on the increase. Under these circumstances the Prime Minister necessarily finds it extremely difficult to make the two ends meet. Possessing no power, he can neither increase and improve the means of income nor cheek the growing expenditure.

15. The order which, as reported last year, the Maharajah passed at my suggestion in regard to limits of expenditure to be observed in carrying on the administration of the State and the management of the zemindaries necessarily proved detrimental to the caste movement, and was, it seems, therefore not carried out in practice. Besides the financial statement, which was drawn up in accordance to that order, no further

result is known to have been produced; and indeed none can be expected as long as the useless "water question" is not given up, for if economy and efficiency are to be secured in the administration, the whole of the establishments in the various departments will have to be revised and made clear of the numerous useless and incompetent employees, who chiefly owe their appointments to the support they have given in respect of that question.

16. There was an appreciable decrease in the amount of crime reported, 511 cases in all having been returned in the year under report, against 575 of the preceding year. The majority of the cases were of a petty character, and related to offenses against property. Of all the different branches of the administration, the criminal branch is looked after by the Maharajah with some attention, it being his wish to see that justice is administered fairly; but this object is frequently frustrated owing to the inexperience and incompetency of the officers to whom the actual work is entrusted.

17. The general administration of the State is weak and inefficient, and as long as the Maharajah, who is himself a weak man and advanced in years, will jealously keep in his own hands power necessary for carrying on the administration , a better result can hardly be expected.

18. The frontier was perfectly quiet during the year, nor was there any internal disturbance of any kind, except such as were caused, in some limited areas, in the usual way, by false rumours of Lushai movements.

ANNUAL TOURS.

19. I spent 106 days of the year in camp, employing the time in the inspection of subdivisional offices, jails, police-stations, frontier guard posts, and toll-stations, as well as schools, dispensaries, and other public institutions, and also bazars and villages in the hills. A considerable portion of the time was also employed in the conduct of enquires regarding certain disputes about the boundary between the State and British territory.

20. The Prime Minister, the Dewan, and the subdivisional officers of the State, were all out during the year, each for a time. They inspected mofussil offices and made local enquiries in important matters. In September last the Prime Minister met His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal at Comillah.

WEATHER AND CROPS

21. The state of the whether during the year was on the whole good. The total rainfall, as shown in the table given below, was somewhat less than the average of previous years; but this, although not so favorable to cultivation, did not in away affect the public health, which throughout the year was remarkably good.

Rainfall Table.

Months		Average fall for the three years 1879-80, 1880-81 and 1881-82	Total Fall in 1882-83	Total Fall in 1883-84
April	1883	1.91	5.07	5.22
May	,,	11.62	13.23	13.87
June	,,	14.06	17.39	14.89
July	,,	12.57	11.15	14.14
August	,,	12.27	14.25	10.12
September	,,	15.70	10.89	8.88
October	,,	6.22	7.85	2.81
November	,,	.08	2.07	....
December	,,	.21	.45	4.53
January	1884	.56	....	....
February	,,	1.24	....	2.39
March	,,	8.46	1.40	3.23
	Total	84.90	83.75	80.08

22. The principal crops produced in the State are those of rice, cotton, oil-seeds, chillies, sugarcane, and tobacco. The last two are grown on the low lands only, while the rest are produced as well in the hills as in the plains. The outturn during the year was good in respect of all the crops except cotton, and also except rice so far as the Kuki jooms of the Koylashar division are concerned. Plough cultivation has in some rare instances been resorted to by those hill tribes who live close to the plains.

23. For cotton the weather is said to have been not very favourable. The plants were neither strong nor very fruitful. Whatever capsules had been produced were mostly destroyed by rats, troops of which appeared in vast numbers in many of the jooms in the Koylashar division and ate up cotton pods, paddy, and almost every other thing besides.

24. The Kukis, who constitute the bulk of the hill population in the Koylashar division, were consequently reduced to much straitened circumstances during the year. The Administration, however, properly came forward to help them when they were most in need. Paddy was purchased at the cost of the State and distributed partly gratis and partly in return for labour, which was employed in cutting timber and other forest produce. I visited some of the Kuki villages at the time, and in consultation with the dewan, who accompanied me, adopted measures for relief and watch, as reported in my letter. No. 5T, dated the 17th January 1884. The men of the military guard posts were at the same time instructed to be particularly on the alert as long as scarcity prevailed amongst the Kukis. No disturbance of any kind, however, took place in any part of the State in consequence of the calamity. The Maharajah spent about Rs. 5,000 in aid of the sufferers, who were nearly two thousand in number.

25. The material condition of the people in general is gradually improving in consequence of continued general success in their occupation as agriculturists and freedom of the country from Lushai raids. To the latter cause is chiefly to be attributed the comparatively easy condition in which the people are now generally found.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE

26. Nothing important occurred in the year in regard to emigration or immigration. Almost every year there is some change in the sites of hill villages, as the people generally in every third year build new villages in places where good joom lands may be available. For this purpose there were some movements amongst the inhabitants of the hills in the year under report.

27. Along the sides of the Gumti and in other parts of the country extensive tracts of culturable and inhabitable low land are lying waste, which could be easily reclaimed, to the immense benefit of the State, if proper encouragement were shown to immigrants. But no step is taken by the Administration in this direction owing, it is said, to want of the necessary funds.

28. The Mugs, whose immigration from the Chittagong Hill Tracts was reported last year, continue to live in the State, where, it seems, they have now been permanently settled. I visited them in their settlement in my last cold-weather tour, and found them to be quite happy and contented in their position.

PRICE OF FOOD-GRAINS AND LABOUR

29. Rice is the chief article of food of the people. Its price during the year was higher than the rate of the preceding year. The higher price, however, was much to the advantage of the ryots, who are growers and sellers of the articale and not its purchasers. It is principally sold to officers and servants of the State and other occasional residents, as well as to traders, who export it for sale in other countries. No noticeable change took place in the price of other food-grains, nor in that of labour, whether skilled or otherwise, as will be known from the following table :-

Table of Price of Food-Grains, &c., and of Labour.

FOOD GRAINS.	Average price of 1879-80, 1880-81 1881-82			Price in 1882-83			Price in 1883-84			REMARKS.
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	
Rice (best sort)	3	0	0	1	10	0	2	8	0	Rate per maund.
Rice (common)	1	12	0	1	4	0	2	0	0	Ditto
Wheat	4	6	0	3	14	0	3	12	0	Ditto
Gram	4	2	0	2	12	0	3	0	0	Ditto
Salt	5	0	0	3	12	0	3	10	0	Ditto
Labour										
Skilled labour										
Mason	12	0	0	13	0	0	13	8	0	Rate per month
Smith	12	0	0	13	0	0	13	8	0	Ditto
Carpenter	11	8	0	13	0	0	13	8	0	Ditto
Unskilled labour										
Agriculturist	7	8	0	7	8	0	7	8	0	Ditto
Day labourers	6	0	0	6	0	0	6	0	0	Ditto

MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

30. No new manufacture of any kind has came to notice. The poeries (cotton rugs) made by the Kukis, the parches (cotton sheets) made by Tipperahs and Manipuris, the faniak (dressing-cloth for Manipuri women) made by the Manipuris, and the rhea (breast-cloth) made by the hill tribes in general, continue to be the principal cotton manufactures of the State, as reported in previous years. Females only are employed in making these articles.

31. Among the other manufactures of the State may be mentioned the daos (hill knives) made by Bengali blacksmiths, the cane and bamboo mats, bamboo baskets and dug-outs made by hill tribes as well as by Bengalis.

32. There are coal-mines in the State, but no work is done in any of them for want of capital.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

33. As reported in previous years, the trade of the country is chiefly conducted by Bengalis, who come from the adjacent districts of Noakhali, Tipperah, Sylhet, and Dacca, and temporarily reside in the State for the purpose. The export trade is principally carried on in cotton, oil-seed, rice, timber, bamboos, canes, thatching-grass, and other forest produce, as well as in elephants, parrots, and various other kinds of singing-birds, and dug-outs; while the chief imports are cloths, sugar, metallic and earthen wares, oil, salt, dried-fish, pulse, and fancy things.

34. The trade in cotton is most important. During the year under report, which was really a bad year for cotton, the article was exported to the extent of about 25,000 maunds, while about 2,000 maunds were consumed locally.

35. The elephant trade is also important. Herds of elephants are caught every year in several parts of the State and sold at Koylashar to merchants, who come from different districts on notices which are previously issued for the purpose. Last year some elephants were also sold at Sonamura, close to Comillah.

36. The manufacture and sale of dug-outs give occupation to a large number of hill people, to whom this trade is more profitable than the trade in elephants, in which outsiders are principally engaged. The dug-outs made in the State are sold chiefly to the inhabitants of Tipperah, Noakhali, and Chittagong, where they are largely used.

37. The total value of the export trade for the year under report is estimated to have been about Rs. 5,83,628, of which cotton and elephants contributed to more than half.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING

38. The "water question" continued, as before, to be subjects of discussion and agitation amongst the people. No large expenditure of money in connection with the matter came to notice during the year. But the course adopted by the promoters of the question of getting all unconverted employees in the Maharajah's service dismissed from their appointment in order that persons who have espoused the cause might be provided with berths, necessarily produced general annoyance and discontent. On several occasions I pointed out to the Maharajah the inexpedience and impropriety of this course, and explained to him the necessity and

desirability, in selecting men of service, of always giving preference to the deserving; but as yet no adequate result has followed in consequence. It appears to me that as long as this undignified movement is not entirely given up no advice in this direction is likely to be of much avail.

39. Nearly all the Thakurs of Agartala, as well as other persons who have the interest of the State at heart, do all equally view the "water question" as improper and harmful. I have always unofficially and privately advised the Maharajah to put an to end to this question once for all. This, however, he has not yet been able to do. Having advanced too far in the matter, he finds it rather difficult now to recede; but sooner or later the question will have to be given up, as it is injurious alike to his reputation and to his government.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

40. Besides what has been mentioned before in paragraphs 6 and 7, there is nothing particular to be stated under this head. The Prime Minister visited the town of Comillah twice during the year, and on each occasion made prolonged and minute inspection of the Maharajah's sudder zamindari office located at the station. He has, no doubt, been now able to know that the management of the zemindaries is not going on in the way it should. But as the chief officers connected with the zemindaries are the chief advisers and supports of the Maharajah in the "water question," he has no great control over them, and is consequently unable to introduce such changes as are necessary for effecting reforms.

41. The manager's appointment is still vacant, and it is likely to remain so for the present, as the Maharajah does not seem inclined to have a manager in addition to the dewan of the zemindari department, upon whom he has considerable reliance. This officer has, on his recommendation, been appointed by Government under section 432, Civil Procedure Code, to be his Agent for prosecuting and defending suits in Civil Courts.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME, AND CIVIL JUSTICE

42. In order to promote the cause of the "water question," some changes were allowed to be made in the personnel of the Police Department, as they have been made in other branches of the service. These changes, as could have been anticipated, have generally been for the worse.

43. In addition to their legitimate duties, the police of the state have a good deal of revenue work to do. They are the collectors of forest revenue, cotton revenue, chowkidari tax, and in some places of land revenue also. For this reason, as well as for the sake of public peace, of which the immediate guardians are police-officers, it is necessary for the Administration to take particular care in selecting men of its Police Department.

44. Many of the criminal cases which come before the State officers concern British subjects who live along the borders. In every country, as a rule, borderers are daring and law-defying. Those of Hill Tipperah form no exception. Crime in this territory is mostly committed by these people, who are chiefly Bengali-Musalmans. Among the native subjects of the State, viz the hill tribes living in the interior, criminal occurrences are extremely rare.

45. The courts of justice are, as before, chiefly presided over by Thakurs, who possess sufficient will, but not sufficient ability, to discharge their duties properly. They are, however, naturally intelligent, and so their want of ability is expected to be gradually diminished in proportion as their experience in the work may be increased.

46. There are four subdivisional offices in the State, which are situated at Agartala, Sonamura, Bilonia and Koylashar, all close to British borders. Two of the subdivisional officers are now quite new to their post, the old incumbents having left their appointments in consequence of, among other circumstances, unpleasant understanding having arisen between them and the durbar in relation to the "water question", which they could not conveniently befriend and support.

47. It is very desirable that the subdivisional offices and the police-stations, in which British subjects have often to appear either as complainants or defendants, should be under charge of intelligent and trustworthy officers. I have accordingly advised the Administration to revise the existing establishments in order that a good and reliable staff of frontier officers may be selected and entertained. I have also advised that the several Magistrates and the chief police-officers should be required to carefully study the criminal laws in force in British territory.

48. As regards the administration of civil justice, the work is neither great in amount nor of much importance in character. At Agartala a separate Moonsif's office is kept up in addition to the Magistrate's office; but at Sonamura, Belania, and Koylashar the subdivisional officer exercises jurisdiction equally over civil, criminal, and revenue matters--an arrangement which, from the small amount of work to be done in each branch, has not been found in any away inconvenient.

49. There are pleaders appointed under rules of the State, who are allowed to practice in all the courts of justice. In consequence of the "water question" some of the foremost men of the class have left this territory, as they considered it too ignoble to join the movement, and found it inconvenient to stay here without joining. The newcomers who have stepped in their places are admittedly men of an inferior stamp.

50. Appeals against the decisions of subordinate courts are heard at Agartala by a Judge, who is an intelligent person and a son-in-law of the Maharajah. Against his orders appeals are carried to the Khas Appellate Court, which is the highest court of justice in the State, being presided over by the Jubaraj, who performs his work with the assistance of two Thakurs.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

51. As said before, the revenue administration is not in a satisfactory condition. The receipts are less than the expenses, and so officers and servants as well as suppliers of provisions and goods are almost always more or less kept in arrears of their dues. The inevitable result is that the former do not at all times pay proper attention to their duties, while the latter sell things at prices which are enormously higher than the market rates. Even the pensioners belonging to the Maharajah's household are sometimes suffered to fall in arears of their allowances, much to their hardship and trouble.

52. The Maharajah, no doubt, sometimes feels this necessitous condition sorely. It was his great desire to marry some of his grown-up children during the year, but he was unable to fulfil it only for want of funds. It is therefore strange that though so much in want, he not only does not take adequate steps to remove it, but occasionally adopts measures which increase its pressure. Unscrupulous people do not fail to trade upon his goodness and so charities and presents are even now ordered by him nearly as freely as before, and liabilities of a permanent nature also are sometimes unnecessarily incurred.

53. All this evil might be easily stopped, and the finances placed in a sound and satisfactory position, if the

Maharajah had given powers to the Prime Minister to carry on the work of the administration. He is himself now incapable of the labour necessary for the due discharge of the work, and being already much above 40, cannot be expected to grow more energetic and industrious hereafter.

54. I have always urged the necessity for the appointment at the head of the administration of an officer possessing ability and authority to act. The present Prime Minister, who is a sensible and willing officer of some experience, might, if duly authorised in that behalf, carry on the work intelligently and smoothly. A very highly gifted administrator is not required for this State. In this connection Political Agent Mr. C.W. Bolton, in his annual report for 1877-78, said as follows :- "This State requires neither an elaborate system of government nor highly-trained men at the head of affairs. The people give very little trouble; they have great respect for authority; they are not particularly quarrelsome among themselves; and as a rule they do not trouble the courts with heavy or serious litigation. The relations between the different classes of the community are simple, and give rise to no complications for the solution of which much wisdom or experience is required on the part of the officials. I have no doubt that an officers who is competent for the charge of a moderate-sized sub-division in Bengal could administer the State satisfactorily. Owing to the extent of the State a larger staff would be required than that usually maintained in a Bengal subdivision, but the officers need not have qualifications superior to those of a subdivisional officer's subordinates."

55. Like those submitted in previous years, the accompanying receipt return shows only the names of the different sources of revenue and the amount of collection made from each. It gives no account of expenditure, and consequently no exact idea of the actual financial condition of the State can be formed from it. This defective character of the annual revenue statement and the desirability of getting a simple return of expenses have been pointed out in previous reports. On this subject, Magistrate and Political Agent Mr. G Toynbee, in the report for 1881-82 remarked :- " I strongly urge this view. A statement of receipts is no cheek, and of but little use, unless accompanied by an outline of expenditure under main heads. No attempt need be made to interfere with the details of the Maharajah's personal expenditure, which would be shown in one lump sum."

56. The above being approved of by Government, I addressed the Maharajah on the subject, suggesting the submission by his office of an annual account of expenditure. In conversation as well as in writing, I explained to him how the submission of such a return would serve to cheek unnecessary and extravagant expenses. His office, however, in reply said, as I have already separately reported, that it was nor convenient for it to carry out the suggestion, and therefore begged to be excused.

57. The return submitted by the Administration does not contain any information regarding the financial position of the Maharajah's zemindaries in British territory. These zemindaries are extensive, fertile, and well cultivated, and are conveniently situated along the border of the State. If properly settled and carefully managed, they should yield six or seven lakhs of rupees a year, - that is to say more than the double of the income of the State. Half of this sum at least ought to be the net profit of the Maharajah minus Government revenue and the cesses, which amount to Rs. 2,12.000, and all other charges.

58. The debts of the Maharajah continue unabated. His creditors, however, have great faith upon his word, and therefore do not give him any trouble. Some of them hold farms in his zemindaries, and realize from them not only the amount of interest due on the sums they have lent, but also a good deal of profits besides.

59. For a long time the Maharajah was contemplating to let out a portion of the landed estates in putni taluks,

in order that by the amount of premium likely to be thereby obtained his debts might be paid off. He has now come to a decision on the subject, and has ordered that steps may be taken to make putni settlement on suitable terms of a portion of the zamindaries in thannah Chagalnia, zillah Noakali. The dewan of the Chuckla katchari and the dewan of Agartala have been directed to carry out the work jointly. If the estates were placed under strong and efficient management, the debts could be easily liquidated in a few years without the necessity to resort to any such steps as causing permanent alienation of a portion of this splendid property.

60. From the receipt return appended to this report, it will be seen that the entire income of the State during the year was Rs. 2,33,831, against Rs. 2,29,961 of the previous year and Rs. 2,21, 376 the average of the preceding three years. It will be seen also that there was increase under twelve heads of revenue and decrease under seven. Land revenue, forest duties collected on the Fenny, and royalty on elephants caught, contributed particularly to raise the income higher than that of the previous year, while the greatest falling off was under the head of cotton. On the whole there was an increase of Rs. 3,870 as compared with the receipts of the previous year, and of Rs. 12,455 in comparison with the average receipt of the preceding three years.

61. *Land revenue from the plain lands* - Land revenue is collected in respect of the low lands only. The collection is made chiefly under khas management. The increase of Rs. 4,344 under this head is due to new settlements having been made in the Udaipur and Koylashar divisions.

62. *Family tax in the hills* - Family-tax is levied at the rate of from Rs. 3 to 8 per family, widows and widowers, as well as those who are infirm and therefore unable to cultivate jooms, being exempted. The decrease of Rs. 1,136 is due to failure of the cotton crop, which straitened the means of the hill-people.

63. *Tax on forest produce* - Taxes on forest produce are collected through farmers, an arrangement by which only about half of the amount of revenue that may be realized under direct management is obtained. The farmers are mostly kinsmen of the Maharajah or his dependents. The increase of Rs. 303 under this head is trifling, and does not call for any remark.

64. *Tax on forest produce floated down the Fenny* - The sum of Rs. 9,217 shown under this head represents the income of the State for 1882-83. The receipts for the year under report, which were paid to the Maharajah a few days ago, amounted to Rs. 12,408-7-6. The increase is due to efficient management of the Government Forest Department, under whose supervision the revenue is collected. The Fenny, of which only one side belongs to the Maharajah is not half as big a river as the Gumti, whose both sides are within the State. The revenue collected on the latter should therefore be at least three times as much as the State share of the Fenny tolls. But under the farming system, under which it is realized, it is only about Rs. 13,000 and no more. Indeed, if the system of collection which is in operation at the Fenny station were introduced in the State, and if the management were as good as it is there, the entire revenue derived as taxes on forest produce floated down the numerous streams which pass through the State would be equal to, if not exceed, a lakh of rupees instead of Rs. 48,897 now collected through farmers.

65. *Tax on cotton and oil-seed* - The decrease of Rs. 15,956 under this head is entirely due to failure of the cotton crop. Oil-seeds were produced in abundance, on account of which a considerable amount of revenue was obtained as tax levied upon them. Were it not for this, the receipts shown under this head would have exhibited a much greater falling off.

66. *Royalty on elephants caught* - The increase of Rs. 9,546 under the head royalty on elephants caught is

attributed to more successful khedda operations during the year. In the several fields which were worked in the year 99 elephants were altogether caught, against 25 of the previous year. Some of the animals died soon after capture, and in one of the fields, viz. Somayia, the work was unsuccessful owing to bad management. Were it not for these circumstances, the increase shown under this head would have been considerably greater. The hills of the State abound in elephants, and if the khedda operations were carried on properly and efficiently, a large income would result from this source.

67. The increase of Rs. 915 in the receipts from the buffalo grazing-mehal is due partly to new settlements made during the year, and partly to greater exertions on the part of the collecting officers. The collection is made at the rate of one rupee for each grown up buffalo and eight annas for each calf a year. It is realised from British subjects only, the subjects of the State not having to pay any tax either on this account or on that of cutting forest produce for their own use.

68. As regards the income derived from the remaining sources, the increases under the heads of stamps and registration were due to the new settlements of land revenue which were effected in the year in the Koylashar and Udaipur divisions. By these settlements not only a permanent increase of income from lands was secured and improvement effected in the receipts from sale of stamps and registration work, but owing to the extension of cultivation which resulted from them the number of pounds in the interior was raised, and so the receipts from cattle-pounds also were increased. The fluctuations under the other heads were slight, not requiring special notice.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

69. There are altogether five Original and two Appellate Courts in the State, in all of which, as a rule, endeavor is made to get the business done in the way which is followed in Courts in British territory. The nature and amount of the work done in these Courts during the year under report will be known in detail from the judicial statements appended to this report. A summary of each of these statements, however, is given in the following paragraphs.

70. *(1) Statement of criminal cases investigated by the police* - There were altogether 156 police cases reported during the year, against 172 of the preceding year. They were mostly cases of minor offences against property. The number was comparatively small both in the Agartala and the Bilania divisions. Of the persons arrested and brought to trial - 160 in all - 65 percent were convicted.

71. *(2) Statement of criminal cases* - Including the pending cases of the previous year, the total number of cases of all descriptions which came up before the Courts was 567 with 610 persons, showing a decrease on the whole of 51 cases and 175 persons as compared with the figures reported last year. The decrease is particularly observed in the returns of the Bilania and Koylashar courts. This is owing chiefly to the fact that the subdivisional officers of Bilania and Koylashar were both absent from their stations for a considerable portion of the year. About 90 percent. of these cases related to persons living in the plains, of whom about 35 percent were British subjects. The cases were chiefly those of petty theft, assault, and simple hurt. Serious cases were only 7 percent on the whole number, against 9 percent of the previous year. The total number of persons brought to trial was 610, of whom 383, or nearly 63 percent, were convicted. The figures showing the area and population of the State are only approximately correct. According to those figures - 3,867 square miles for area and 95,637 souls for population - there was one case in every 6.8 square miles during the year,

and in every one thousand of the population there were 6.4 persons accused and 4 persons convicted. Should the figures in regard to cases concerning British subjects be left out of account, there would be one case for every 9.3 square miles, and in every one thousand of the population there would be 4.3 persons as accused and 2.6 persons as convicted.

72. *(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in criminal cases* - Altogether there were 79 cases in the Appellate and 7 in the Khas Appellate Court. Of these, in 43 of the former and in 6 of the latter the appellants were wholly or partially successful - a result which, though not creditable to the individual courts whose orders were reversed or modified, conduced, no doubt, to create confidence in the minds of the people in regard to the general administration of justice in the State. The work of the Appellate Courts was done more promptly than before.

From what I have seen of their work in Noakhally , I cannot conceive that such confidence is justified.
H. G. COOKE.

73. *(4) Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned* - The number of cases concerning British subjects was on the whole 153, in which 198 person were altogether brought to trial, against 182 cases and 257 persons of the previous year. The decrease was mainly owing to the reasons which caused a general decrease in the number of cases of all descriptions, as mentioned above in paragraph 71. The cases were generally petty, - theft of forest produce, simple hurt and assault, and smuggling of cotton having been the common offences. Of the persons brought to trial, 69.2 percent were convicted and punished.

74. *(5) Statement of cases in which warrants were issued under the Extradition Act.* - Against 15 persons in 7 cases of the previous year, warrants were issued in an equal number of cases for the arrest of 23 persons during the year under report. Of these persons and of those who had remained unarrested at the close of the previous year - 42 in all - 16 were arrested and made over to the Maharajah's Courts for trial and 11 surrendered themselves of their own accord to the officers of the State. All of these 27 persons - 16+11 - and the one under-trial prisoner of the previous year, were tried during the year under review, with the result of conviction of 23 and acquittal of 5.

75. *(6) Statement of cases which were certified under the Extradition Act* - The number of cases certified during the year for trial in British territory was 3 with 21 persons, against 2 with 4 persons of the previous year. Of these 3 cases cases, two were heard and found true, the accused tried being all convicted. The third case was struck off on default.

76. *(7 and 7a) Statements of civil suits* - The civil suits of the year increased in number from 246 to 254, and in value from Rs. 14,866-1-8 to Rs. 33,261 -4-10. The average value per suit therefore rose from Rs. 60-6-11 to Rs. 130-15-2. The number disposed of was 79.4 percent on the whole. Of these 32, or 24 percent. only were contested, the rest being either rejected, compromised, or decreed ex parte. The total amount of stamp fees realized was Rs. 3,691-3, against Rs. 2,183-8 of the previous year. The increase in the number and value of civil suits indicates increased prosperity of the people.

77. *(8) Statement showing the result of appeals in civil suits* - The number of cases before the Appellate Court was 42, against 35 of the preceding year. Of these, 39 only were disposed of - 25 against, and 10 either wholly or partially in favor of the appellants, while 4 were remanded and 3 remained pending. The work in the Khas Appellate Court was, as usual, small there having been only three cases there during the year, of which two were disposed of with the orders of the Lower Court being confirmed, and one remained pending.

78. *(9) Statements of civil suits in which British subjects were concerned* - The total number of such suits increased from 87 to 122, the increase being especially noticeable in suits in which British subjects were defendants and in those in which British subjects were both plaintiffs and defendants - a circumstance which speaks favourably of the Courts, in which evidently the people are gradually having more confidence.

JAILS

79. In the four jails of the State there were 47 prisoners at the end of the year, against 53 of the preceding year. The average daily number was 39.4 and the sick in hospital were 30, of whom 29 were cured and one remained under treatment at the close of the year.

80. The prisoners are treated with leniency, and are employed as well in indoor as in outdoor work. The indoor work generally consists of weaving carpets, working of oil-mills and manufacturing bamboo mats and cane chairs, and the outdoor work of road making, road-repairing, clearing jungle, and servings the public on wages. The wages are generally calculated at the rate of three annas per head per diem. During the year one case of escape occurred in respect of the Agartala Jail and two in respect of the jail at Bilania.

MILITARY AND FRONTIER MATTERS

81. The military return annexed to this report shows that at the end of the year the force of the State consisted of 288 men, rank and file. The men are of different nationalities, as detailed in the return. The main part of the force is engaged in doing duties on the frontier. The number of officers is proportionately somewhat too large.

82. For the protection of the country against the Lushais there are three guard-posts in the Koylashar division. viz. those of Dharmanagar, Chirakuti, and Kamalpur, and two in the Udaipur division, viz. those at Eksari and Udaipur. Each of these posts is garrisoned by a suitable number of officers and men. The Eksari guard, however, is kept up only for the raiding season. In front of these garrisons, chaur-chaukis are maintained in the winter months. Chaur-chaukis are secret posts, where the hill people themselves watch as van-guards.

83. During the year the above-mentioned posts were kept up in order, and the country was in peace. Some little excitement, however, was occasionally observed amongst the people of certain villages owing to false rumours about Lushai movements having reached them, but no disturbance was produced in any part, as it was soon found that the fears were groundless. On one occasion, in the month of January last, some of the subjects in the Maharajah's zemindari in thannah Chagalnia, zillah Noakhali, who once, in 1860, had suffered from Lushai inroads, were agitated in consequence of such false rumours. The agitation, however, soon died away; but to reassure the people an additional guard post as a temporary arrangement was established in their midst at Bilania.

Bilania is not in thannah Chagalnia at all.
H. G. COOKE.

84. No raid of any kind is known to have taken place in the country since the Lushai Expedition of 1871-72. The Kukis of the Maharajah's territory are comparatively peaceable and law-abiding. The scarcity which prevailed amongst them during the year induced them to commit no offence of any kind.

STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

85. All over the country, in the hills as well as in the plains, there are pathways running from village to village,

which are kept open by the villagers themselves. Besides these, there are other foot-paths, locally called lahars, which are cut and kept clear by the Administration, and which join the subdivisional offices, the police-stations, and the frontier posts with one another and all with Agartala. By means of these pathways shoulder-borne trade, as well as general communication, is carried on in the country - the former in the dry months, and the latter in all seasons.

86. There is also a good deal of river communication in the State which is largely taken advantage of by the trading classes as well as by the Administration. All the principal offices of the State, as reported last year, and all the chief places of trade, are situated on the sides of the streams, which flow through the country, and which are navigable by small boats nearly throughout the year.

87. Raised roads are few and short, and are to be seen only in the capital of the State and in the subdivisional head-quarters. They are unmettaled and generally unbridged, but are otherwise kept in a tolerably fair state. The road which joins old Agartala, where the Maharajah now resides, with new Havely, where the Agency is situated, requires a bridge at the point where it crosses the river Haora. The newly-constructed road, which is connected with the Kasba road in the district of Tipperah, requires dressing and some culverts; but these and other works of the kind are necessarily left unaccomplished for want of funds.

EDUCATION.

88. Owing to financial difficulties, no benevolent or charitable work is carried on with earnestness. The educational institutions are indifferently looked after and irregularly supported. Several of them, therefore, necessarily collapsed during the year. Thus, on the 31st March last there were working in the various parts of the State only 15 schools with 425 students, against 31 Schools and 615 students of the previous year. With the exception of the schools at Agartala, Sonamura, and Koylashar, in which some English is taught, all of these institutions are elementary vernacular patshalas. The Maharajah had a higher class English school in the town of Comillah, which, after struggling for existence for some time, did, for want of support and proper management, cease to exist in the year under report.

89. The children of the Maharajah's family are taught by private tutors, who are entertained for the purpose. Both the Jubraj and the Bara Thakur are now grown-up young men who have passed the time of pupilage. The latter, who is smart and active, visited Calcutta during the time of the International Exhibition, and profited much by what he saw and heard there. The education of the Jubaraj, who is the next heir to the guddi, has been neglected. He has not yet had an opportunity to see the world outside the limits of Agartala. I have on several occasions pointed out to the Maharajah the advisability of allowing the Jubaraj an opportunity of going out to see how administration is carried on in the settled districts in British territory. The Maharajah has always lent a willing ear to the advice, but has no been able to act up to it on account of financial difficulties.

DISPENSARIES.

90. The dispensaries of the State did not fare better than the schools. They, too, were looked after with indifference. Being ill supplied with medicines and other necessaries, their popularity was diminished, and so the number of patients treated in them during the year fell from 4,327 to 3,664.

91. The medical establishment of the State is exceedingly large, for besides a chief physician at Agartala, who is of the rank of a Civil Surgeon, and a native doctor at each of the subdivisions, there are in the

Maharajah's service no less than half a dozen of other native doctors, trained and untrained, a homeopathic practitioner, and a number of physicians of the native school - kabirajes, ojha, baidyas, hakims, &c. But, like other servants of the State, these physicians are more or less kept in arrears of pay, and are therefore generally discontented - a circumstance which tends to lesson their usefulness, making them comparatively, less attentive to their duties to the State and to the public.

92. But fortunately for the people, the year under report was particularly healthy. The patients who attended the dispensaries had generally trifling complaints, which were mostly of fever, diarrhoea, dysentry, rheumatism, sores, and skin diseases. Of the entire number treated, 95.2 per cent, were cured.

93. There is no arrangement in any of the dispensaries for maintaining, in-patients. The number of persons seeking indoor treatment is small. But when a poor sufferer appears and asks for it, the doctor in charge cannot readily admit him for want of means.

POST-OFFICE.

94. The Government post-office attached to the Agency worked well during the year. It is the only post-office in the State. A good deal of monetary transactions is carried on in it owing to a considerable portion of the remittance which the Raj and its employees have to make to different places being made through it. The amount of money-orders issued during the year was Rs. 43,859-6, while the value of covers insured was Rs. 13,934, making in two items only a total sum of Rs. 57,793-6. The amount of fees realized as commission upon this sum was more than sufficient to bear the entire annual charge of the office.

95. There is no postal arrangement in the interior of the State, where communications necessary for purposes of administration are carried on under special arrangements. made according to circumstances. The bulk of the population living in the interior are illiterate and uncivilized, who neither know nor require any system of communication by letters.

MISCELLANEOUS.

96. Some of the pillars intended to mark the common boundary of the State and British territory have been found to be occupying wrong positions, being situated not exactly on the line of boundary, as they should be, but on one side of it - either within the State, or within British dominions. It would be well, therefore, if all the pillars were once inspected with a view to correct the positions of those which are wrongly placed.

I entirely dissent from this view.
H. G. COORE.

97. Mr. Schmidting, a German artist formerly in the employ of the Mahrajah, and Mr. J. S. Larminie, the late manager of the Maharajah's zemindaries, had during the year some differences with the durbar in regard to the accounts of their claims against the Maharajah. The claims of the former, which related chiefly to the amount of pay he had earned by service, were comparatively easy of settlement, but those of Mr. Larminie are of a different character. Having carried on various speculations in the State, Mr. Larminie incurred liabilities to the Administration. His claims and the counter-claims of the State against him, have been arranged to be settled by arbitration. The Maharajah, in accordance to the advice given to him on the subject, has already appointed an arbitrator to act on his side.

98. At the instance of the Executive Committee of the late International Exhibition of Calcutta, the durbar

was requested to send some suitable articles to be exhibited. The request was complied with, and specimens of the curious manufactures of the State and other articles were selected and forwarded to the exhibition accordingly.

99. At the end of every winter a fair is held at Koylashar, where the various kinds of produce of that part of the country are collected for public inspection and for sale. Annually on that occasion the subdivisional officer of the place meets in public the Kuki chiefs of the division, who are invited for the purpose. This year the fair and the meeting were both successfully conducted. They were attended by the dewan of the State who is much liked and respected by the Kukis. Such gatherings of the hill-people are desirable, as they serve to promote friendly feelings between all concerned.

100. The clerk of this office, Baboo Gobinda Chandra Das, performed his duties througnout the year with intelligence and assiduity, and gave me entire satisfaction.

No. 1152, dated Comillah, the 27th June 1884.

Memo. by - H. G. COOKE, ESQ., Political Agent.

Copy forwarded to the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

Having only been in charge for a few days, I can speak little from personal knowledge of the affairs of Hill Tipperah.

I visited Bilania in November last, and the subdivisional arrangements appeared to me to be very bad indeed.

Mr. Hopkins informed me verbally that he considered the whole administration very bad, and that he was much dissatisfied with the present Assistant Political Agent, Baboo Umakant Das. I saw something of the way in which work was conducted in matters relating to cases between the Maharajah's people and the ryots of Noakhali. The conduct of the Hill Tipperah authorities I considered grossly scandalous, and the action the Assistant Political Agent took gave me an impression that he was entirely in sympathy with the disgraceful state of affairs.

His present report indicates a lamentable want of wholesome influence on the part of the Agency.

Statement showing the amount of revenue derived from all sources in 1883-84.

Serial number.	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average receipts for the three years, 1879-80, 1880-81, and 18881-82	Receipts in whole rupees in 1882-83.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1883-84.	AS COMPARED WITH 1882-83.		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.	Land revenue from plain lands	34,862	29,394	33,738	4,344	....	
2.	Family tax in the hills	19,814	24,224	23,088	....	1,138	
3.	Tax on forest produce	38,993	48,594	48,897	303	....	
4.	Do. on the Fenny	6,484	6,810	9,217	2,407	....	
5.	Do on cotton and oil seeds	80,685	84,641	68,685	....	15,956	
6.	Royalty on elephants caught	12,173	9,562	19,108	9,546	....	
7.	Buffallo-grazing mehal	1,762	711	1,626	915	....	
8.	Khotagari mehal	1,685	1,915	1,888	....	27	
10.	Kazai (kazifee) mehal	168	418	483	65	....	
11.	Rents on markets	655	651	736	85	....	
12.	Law and justice - fines	2,913	3,455	3,908	453	....	
13.	Ditto Ditto stamp and court fees	7,607	7,954	8,859	905	....	
14.	Ditto ditto - process fees	1,106	1,406	1,218	...	188	
15.	Ditto ditto - cattle pounds	1,401	1,334	2,290	956	....	
16.	Ditto ditto - abkari (excise)	1,170	1,483	1,454	....	29	
17.	Nazars	2,173	895	983	88	....	
18.	Adda (chowkidari-tax) mehal	1,898	3,711	3,556	....	155	
21.	Registration	1,998	1,595	2,124	529	....	
22.	Miscellaneous	3,829	1,208	1,973	765	....	
	Total	2,21,376	2,29,961	2,33,831	21,361	17,401	Increase on the whole of Rs. 8870

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR
1884-85

No 1527, dated Commillah, the 13th July 1885.

From-F. H.B. SKRINE ESQ, Offg. Magistrate of Tripperah and ex-officeo Political Agent Hill Tipperarh,

To- The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

I Have the honour to submit herewith, in original, an administration report for the year 1884-85, from the pen of Baboo Umakanta Das, Assistant Political Agent, Hill Tipperah.

2. The report embodies views very similar to my own, and is so exhaustive a resume of the history of the State during the past official year that I have but little to add to the information which it conveys. The record is not one of rapid development, because the standard of civilisation attained by the Maharaja's subjects is by no means a high one; while the incentives to progress, material and intellectual, to be found in such abundance in British territory, are here entirely wanting.

3. As in other Oriental States, the character of the ruler counts for much. It is impossible to deny to the Maharaja the possession of many virtues and of a degree of refinement which is rarely met with in his class. But his good qualities are to some extent neutralised by his growing disinclination for business, his subservience to the clique by which he is surrounded, and his extreme reluctance to surrender any portion of the burden of rule to hands more competent than his own.

4. Among those whose position entitles them to a more considerable share in the administration are the Maharaja's two sons, the Jubaraj and the Bara Thakur, who under the peculiar dynastic laws of Hill Tipperah, will both succeed the present Maharaja. They are youths of intelligence and promise; but their utter inexperience of the world and of business will, I fear, prove serious drawbacks to their success in the art of governing. I have urged the Maharaja to allow them to visit Calcutta, or even Comillah, and often give them opportunities of gaining an insight into the mechanism of our administration, but here, as is the case of other projects, there are insuperable financial difficulties.

5. The only member of the reigning family who has shown any capacity for affairs is the Prime Minister, Thakur Dananjoy Deb Burman but his influence has been brought to an irreducible minimum by the intrigues of his Highness's *entourage*.

6. In spite of all drawbacks, however the administration of the State, save in the one instance of finance, will bear comparison with that of most tracts under native rule. Justice is fairly provided for, the army and police are tolerably efficient, life and property are nearly as secure as in British territory, and in spite of a most unscientific fiscal system wealth is slowly increasing.

7. It is true that the military establishment have not been subjected to a severe strain, but that, in vew of the possibility of frontier complications it is highly desirable that the up-country and Gurkha element in the troops should be strengthened. There again the difficulty is pecuniary one.

8. On the question of finance, I venture to annex a translation of a vernecular letter addressed by myself to the Maharaja, which has received his close personal attention. It summarises so concisely the position in this respect as to render further comment unnecessary.

9. I may state however, that things have now reached a crisis. I have reason to believe that the liabilities of the State are not less than 11 lakhs of rupees, necessitating an annual charge of Rs. 80000. The Maharaja's

credit is at its lowest ebb and he is in point of fact insolvent.

10. And this in spite of the fact that the profits from his splendid zemindaris in British territory would, after a decade of good management, suffice to relive him of this load of debts, and indeed yield a handsome surplus, enabling the Maharaja to provide his large and increasing family. I am satisfied that one of two courses will alone save the little State from utter ruin. The Maharaja must apply that his zemindaris may be managed by the Court of Wards, or that a Commission may be appointed by the British Government with full powers to introduce drastic reforms in every department.

11. Though His Highness has always given his best attention to advice and suggestions on my part, I have hesitated to recommend him to seek the assistance of his suzerain towards re-establishing financial equilibrium. I am aware that any suggestion of the kind would be interpreted by those around him to mean a covert attack on his independence, an argument which never fails to set His Highness against any scheme which may be submitted to him.

12. To advert to a pleasanter subject, I am happy to state that during the recent political crises the Maharaja demonstrated his loyalty to the Crown by chivalrously placing the entire resources of the State at the disposal of Government. His offer was acknowledged in terms which caused him the sincerest pleasure.

13. I would , in conclusion, express my satisfaction with the work of Baboo Umakanta Das throughout the year. He has gained a complete insight into the affairs of the hill territory, and his information has been found to be as accurate as his suggestions were useful. If he possesses but little direct influence on the course of events, it is because the Maharaja is well aware that the functions of the Political authorities are restricted to tendering advice which may be disregarded with impunity.

No. 311, dated Agartala, the 26th June 1885.
From — BABOO UMA KANTA DAS. Assistant Political Agent, Hill Tipperah ,
To- The Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,

I have honour to submit the Annual General Administration Report for the year 1884-85.

2. The year was a peaceful , uneventful, and on the whole s prosperous one. The public health was generally good and the harvest reaped in the plains and in the hills were nearly everywhere abundant, The people, who are almost all agriculturists, were therefore generally in a state of contentment and prosperity.

3. The administration was carried on quietly in its usual way, which is remarkable neither for energy nor for prudence. The offices and office-bearers were mainly the same as in the preceding year. The rule and practice in the conduct of business were also the same. In the general results, therefore, there was no appreciable change for the better.

4. His Highness the Maharaja continued to keep in his own hands the real power of carrying on the work of the administration in almost all branches, great and small, and discharged his duties, as before, generally leisurely. As long as the Maharaja will not confer full power of management upon a reliable officer, the affairs of the State cannot be expected to be put in a satisfactory position.

5. The necessity for having at the head of the administration an efficient officer with full power to carry on the work has been repeatedly pointed out to His Highness, but as yet no proper action has been taken by him

to remove the want. He is evidently unwilling to grant full authority to anybody. Officers able enough for managing the State are not entirely wanting in his service, but it is in point of authority only that they are deficient. The Prime Minister, Thakur Dhananjoy Deb, and Dewan, Baboo Durga Prashad Gupta, were both successful subdivisional officers in the State. The secret of their successes lies in the fact that as subdivisional officers they enjoy comparatively greater liberely of action. They then generally acted on their own responsibility and were guided by their own judgment , while at head-quarters, nearly everything, small or great, goes up to the Maharaja for orders.

TOURS

6. In August and September I went out and visited some of the forest toll-stations in the Agartala and Sonamura divisions, namely those which are situated on the sides of small streams that are navigable only during the rainy season. Work in that period is generally heavy in all such stations, as people of the neigbouring villages in British territory come in large numbers during the time and export produce cut in the hills, by floating the same down the streams. Formerly disturbances would sometimes occur at the places, but now everything is conducted generally peaceably. In some places, however, the men employed by the farmers collected the export duty in British territory. I pointed out to the administration the impropriety of allowing this to be done, and orders were accordingly issued preventing the practice.

7. In January I made a prolonged tour in the Koylashar division, visiting all the frontier guard-posts, the police-stations, the schools and nearly all other public institutions. I visited also some of the Tipperah Punjis, with regard to which the State was in dispute with the Government of Assam. Further, in Golcheri and Mohanpur I looked to the settlement of certain questions regarding the common boundary of Sylhet and Hill Tipperah. At Golcheri, which is in British territory, a toll office was newly established by a farmer of the forest revenue of the State and at Mohanpur a boundary pillar was found situated within the jurisdiction of Hill Tipperah. The wrong in both the places was rectified in my presence, in the former by the Maharaja's subdivisional officer of Koylashar, who ordered the toll office to be forthwith removed from the spot and established within the boundary of the State, and in the latter by the Magistrate of Agartala and the Sub-Deputy Collector of Habiganj in Sylhet, by whom the pillar in question was taken to and set up in its proper place.

8. A similarly long tour was undertaken in March when I visited the Sonamura and The Bilania divisions of the State. In February short trips were made to places within the Agartala division, in one important part of which, however, namely in thana Bishalgarh, I spent about a week. Altogether the tours occupied 92 days.

9. The subdivisional officer of Koylashar accompanied me nearly in all my journeys in his division. He made extensive tours on the occasion also, and evinced a laudable desire to be acquainted with the condition, wants, and wishes of the people under his care. The subdivisional officer of Sonamura also moved amongst the people of his division for a considerable portion of the cold weather.

10. Of the principal officers of Agartala, the Prime Minister visited Comillah twice. The object of his visit on both the occasions was chiefly to see that the Government revenue on account of the Maharaja's zemindaris in British territory was duly paid. He visited also the subdivision of Sonamura.

WEATHER AND CROPS.

11. Rainfall is registered only in the Agency, there being no arrangement for recording it in any other part of the State. Such being the case, sufficient account of rainfall, such as would indicate the state of the weather of the country, is not procurable. I have suggested to His Highness the Maharaja the advisability of having a rain-gauge at each of the subdvisional headquarters of the State.

12. The total fall of rain during the year at Agartala, of which a comparative table is given below, was very deficient, being less than that recorded in any previous year. It was only 70.36 inches against 80.08 inches reported last year, and 83.40 inches the average of the preceding three years.

Months	Average fall of 1880-81, 1881-82 and 1882-83	Total fall in 1883-84	Total fall in 1884-85
April	3.17	5.22	7.41
May	12.29	13.87	11.90
June	16.21	14.89	15.58
July	11.40	14.14	12.69
August	13.07	10.12	4.92
September	11.43	8.88	6.74
October	6.18	2.81	6.36
November	0.77	....	2.01
December	0.15	4.53	....
January	0.38	....	....
February	0.38	2.39	1.63
March	5.06	3.23	1.12
Total	83.49	80.08	70.36

13. There was an outbreak of cholera at Agartala in the month of October last, which caused a few deaths. The general health of the people was otherwise good throughout the year. The state of crops was also good. Rice and cotton, the two principal articles of agricultural produce of the State, were both more than the average. The staple rice crop is amun, aus being grown in small quantities only. Of the other articles, oil-seeds were produced in abundance, while chllies, sugarcane, tobacco, pulses, and other winter corps were all good.

14. The material condition of the people is gradually improving. The inhabitants of the plains are certainly better off than those of the hills. But the condition of the hill folk too is every year becoming more prosperous. This is evident from the fact that gradually larger quantities of such imported articles as cloths, brass-pots, umbrellas &c., are observed to find their way into the houses of the hill-men. The lands being fertile and there being no want of them, the people can easily manage to better their condition, if they like. But they are unaspiring and indolent.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

15. There was no emigration from the country during the year. The Mugs, whose immigration into this territory was mentioned in previous reports, continue to live in their new settlements. They have this year been followed by a considerable number of men of their class and by Chakmas — in all about 300 families— who, like them, have come from the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

16. The subdivisional officer of Koylashar made considerable endeavours to get men from Sylhet for reclaiming the waste lands in pargana Dharmanagar and in Khaiauri. His endeavours were partially successful. I visited both the places during the cold weather and found many new settlers in the former and several candidates for settlement in the latter. Khaiauri is an extensive tract of fertile lands, bounded on three sides by hills and on one side by the river Khoai, which is navigable for a good portion of the year.

17. With the exception of *abda*, i.e. the right of holding lands free of rent for a certain number of years, the Administration in its present financial difficulties cannot afford to give the immigrants any further help. If the case was not so, large settlement could be established in several parts of the State now lying waste, by brigning people from the over-populated portions of Bengal and Behar. The condition of the neighbouring districts is too prosperous to make a change of habitation desirable to them.

18. The State has within its jurisdiction vast tracts of low hills containing good joom lands and extensive plains which are exceedingly fit for plough cultivation. The latter are situated along the sides of rivers and in valleys. In some — such as Langthum Pathar in the Bilania division and Udoypore in the Sonamura division — traces of ancient habitations and bygone glories of the State are still to be found in the shape of tanks of enormous magnitude now overgrown with jungle and ruins of brick-built houses and walls.

PRICE OF FOOD-GRAINS AND LABOUR.

19. The price of rice has been on the increase since 1882-83. This is owing to the increasing demand from outside and not to short produce. It is creditable to the present administration that, unlike the practice which was in vogue before, it does not place any restriction upon the free exportation of the grain. In consequence of this circumstance the material condition of the people is being gradually improved. For, as mentioned in the previous reports, the people are sellers of the article and not purchasers.

20. There was no change in the market price of salt. But in that of wheat and gram, there was a falling off. These articles, however, are not largely in use. They are chiefly required by the small class of up-country men who live in Agartala on business.

21. Labour, both skilled and unskilled, is imported from the neighbouring districts. Local labour is comparatively small, as the residents are pretty well off with their agricultural profession, and do not therefore want to work for hire. The following table shows the comparative prices of food -grains and labour that prevailed during the past years. —

FOOD GRAINS.	Average price of 1880-81, 1881-82 and 1882-83.			Price in 1883-84.			Price in 1884-85.			REMARKS.
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	
Rice, best sort	1	14	0	2	8	0	3	0	0	Rate per maund.
Rice, common	1	4	0	2	0	0	2	4	0	Ditto
Wheat	4	0	0	3	12	0	3	4	0	Ditto
Gram	3	6	0	3	0	0	2	12	0	Ditto
Salt	4	8	0	3	10	0	3	10	0	Ditto
Labour										
Skilled :-										
Mason	12	8	0	13	8	0	14	0	0	Rate per month
Smith	12	8	0	13	8	0	14	0	0	Ditto
Carpenter	12	8	0	13	8	0	14	0	0	Ditto
Unskilled :-										
Agriculturist	7	8	0	7	8	0	7	8	0	Ditto
Day labourers	6	0	0	6	0	0	6	8	0	Ditto

MANUFACTURE AND MINES.

22. As reported in previous years, the manufactures of the country are few and in a commercial point of view unimportant. They are chiefly cotton fabrics, bamboo and cane- made articles, daos or hill knives, and molasses. The following is a list of the cotton fabrics : —

Poeri	Cotton rug--	a Kuki manufacture.
Parchas	Cotton sheets-	made by hill people of all classes.
Phaniak	Wearing apparel --	a Manipuri manufacture.
Eniphi	Wearing sheet—	ditto ditto
Talaiphi	Bed sheet --	ditto ditto
Ngnaobong	A thick wearing sheet --	ditto ditto
Rhea	Breast-cloth --	a Tipperah manufacture.

23. The above are manufactured more for home use than for sale. In the work, females only are employed, and not men. Molasses are manufactured in small quantities in the plains. The bamboo and cane-made articles are chiefly mats and baskets, in which a small trade is carried on.

24. Coal mines are known to exist in several parts of the State, but no works is done in any , as there is no demand for coal in the country. It is believed that if the Tipperah to Sylhet Railway be opened, the mines will be brought under work. The coal procurable in the State is understood to be of good quality.

FOREST.

25. More than half of the country is occupied by heavy forests, which consist of valuable timber, such as sal, jarail, &c., and of bamboos, canes and other useful articles. With the exception of some kinds of timber, the forest produce is freely exported from the hills by being floated down the rivers which flow through the country. For want of roads , the transportation of heavy timber from the interior of the hills is seldom undertaken by anybody.

26. The Administration has recently taken steps to reserve the sal forest in the Goomti valley, where there are three extensive tracts literally covered with sal trees. Two of these tracts, situated not far from Sonamura, are each about 15 miles in length and 1 mile in breadth. The third tract lies higher up the Goomti near Udoypore, and is nearly equally extensive. Formerly there was no restriction as to the cutting and exporting of the sal trees, and so they were felled down and carried away at random. For this reason saplings only are now more to be seen in the reserved forests than plants of mature growth. His Highness the Maharaja has been advised to place the sal forest in charge of a properly qualified officer, in order that they may be duly looked after and improved. The matter has engaged the attention of the Durbar.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

27. The tradesmen are all Bengalis of the adjacent districts. Among the natives of the State there is no class whose profession is trade, agriculture being the chief pursuit of all.

28. Except rice , nearly all other food-grains, as also all articles of convenience and comfort, are imported. The imports are mostly consumed at the place at which they are brought. They are not, as a rule, distributed elsewhere.

29. The export consists chiefly of cotton, forest produce, wild elephants, singing birds, dug-outs, and charcoal, and also to a small extent of rice. The entire value of the export trade of the year is estimated at Rs 6,26,000 against Rs.5,83,628 of the previous year.

30. The trade of the country is slowly improving, as is clear from the fact that nearly all the old markets are gradually flourishing, while new ones are being established in hitherto unimportant places. At each of the head-quarters stations, and almost at each of the police thannas and outposts, there is now a standing market which is attended both by Bengalis and hill people. This is a state of things which was not in existence seven years ago. The purchasing power of the people has evidently increased owing to the generally good harvests which they have obtained successively during the last few years.

31. In consequence of the number of purchasers being insufficient, the elephant trade was not very successful during the year, although a considerably large number of wild elephants had been caught in the Khedda fields. Altogether 114 elephants of the total estimated value of one lakh of rupees were put up to auction, of which only a few were sold, the rest having had to be taken out of the State for disposal.

32. The trade in cotton also was not very prosperous, owing it is said to the success which has attended the jute traffic that is now being extensively carried on in the adjacent districts by people who hitherto used to export cotton from the hills. In consequence of this, about a third part of the quantity that was available for exportation remained undisposed of at the end of the year — a fact which came to my notice during the course

of my movements in the interior. To stimulate the sale of the article, a reduction of the rates at which duty is levied by the Administration is necessary. This has accordingly been suggested to the Durbar, where it is now under consideration. The present rate of duty is Rs.2 per maund of uncleaned cotton, the market price of which varies from Rs.4. 1/2 to Rs 5. 1/2 . The total quantity of cotton exported during the year is estimated at 24.000 maunds of the aggregate value of about Rs.1,30,000.

33. The trade in dug-outs, charcoal, timber, bamboos, and other forest produce was carried on, as usual, with the people of the neighboring districts. Dug-outs are constructed in the interior of the hills, and floated down the rivers Goomti and Feni to the districts of Tipperah, Noakhali, and Chittagong. Charcoal is prepared in places close to the plains.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING.

34. The caste movement, mentioned in previous reports, was not much under agitation during the year. His Highness now knows that the movement cannot in the end be successful. He knows also that the principal Thakurs of Agartala , as well as all who are well wishers of his State, are against it. He has not, therefore, during the year been very forward in the matter. But it has not entirely been given up. For without compromising his position as Maharaja, His Highness cannot retrace his steps from the point to which he has already advanced.

35. Now nearly all the Hindu Officers in the service of the State, high or low in grade, have joined in the movement — a fact which chiefly accounts for the abatement of the agitation regarding the matter. All the chief classes of Hindus of the adjacent districts are also understood to be now willing to side with the Maharaja, if they can get due consideration from him.

36. The marriages of two of His Highness' children — a son and a daughter— took place in March last. Unlike the practice observed before, none of the principal Hindu families residing in the Maharaja's zemindaris in the district of Tripperah were invited on the occasion . This was done advisedly, perhaps from the supposition that no invitation would be accepted. But it was taken by those concerned as an act of unkindness on the part of the Maharaja. For it is said that many would have come and taken part in the marriage festivities with alacrity, in spite of the existing differences in regard to the disagreeable movement under notice.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

37. In the report for the year 1882-83 the abolition of the post of the officer styled Minister Associate was noticed. With the abolition of the post, the services of its holder, Baboo Shambhu Chandra Mukerjee of Calcutta, were dispensed with. The Baboo was chiefly employed in carrying on correspondence with the agency — a work which since his dismissal is being performed by a dewan in addition to his other duties. The arrangement has up to date answered every practical purpose. During the year under report, however, the Durbar thought it necessary to re-employ the Baboo, who has accordingly been engaged under the title of Minister, and has been placed in charge of the Military, Education, Judicial and Political Departments of the Administration. Since his re-appointment, however, he is living in Calcutta, and it is said that he has received permission from the Maharaja to advise him from there.

38. Another new appointment created in the administration during the year is that of an Assistant Magistrate in the person of a son-in -law of the Maharaja, a youth of about 24 years of age, who has been given magisterial

jurisdiction with small powers over a portion of Thana Agartala. The post is an honourary one, and seems to have been created more for giving the holder a training in judicial and executive work than for removing any actual want.

39. After a good deal of deliberation, the post of the manager of the Maharaja's zemendaris in British territory has been filled up, Mr. E. F. Sandys being appointed to it. Mr. Sandys is understood to have obtained the same powers as were enjoyed by his predecessor, Mr. Larminie. These powers, however, are said to be insufficient for efficient management of the estates. The truth seems to be that every superior officer has sufficient power given to him in writing, but that in the present state of things, when he Maharaja's wishes are required to be consulted in almost all matters, nobody in practice is able to exercise his powers fully and independently.

40. The above mentioned appointments have not yet produced any material effects upon the general administration . For the Minister, as noticed before, is absent from the State ever since his appointment, and the Manager of the zemindaris is engaged on a special duty in connection with the Balishira hills in Sylhet , while the territorial jurisdiction of the Assistant Magistrate and also his powers are too small to be of much consequence.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

41. The administration of revenue is, as before, in an unsatisfactory condition. The expenses are far in excess of the receipts, the amount of yearly deficit being understood to be over a lakh of rupees, which is equal to about half of the annual income of the State. In conseauence of this, the chief officers are often unable to make the two ends meet, and at times find themselves paralyzed in the discharge of their duties.

42. The finances began to fall into disorder from the time of the heavy and protracted law suits of Kumar Navadwip Chandra Deb, which commenced in 1874, and were not finally disposed of before 1883. Owing to these lawsuits , the State incurred large debts, which have since been considerably increased, chiefly for — 1st, the caste movement, which was seen on foot in 1882, 2nd, Maharaja's journey to Brindaban, undertaken in 1882-83, and 3rd, marriages of the Maharaja's youngest children, celebrated during the year under report. The extraordinary expenses thus successively incurred on account of these special objects considerably reduced the financial condition of the State, which, owing to the lawsuits just mentioned, had already been a great deal straitened.

43. The total amount of the debt of the State is believed to be over Rs,11,00,000, for nearly half of which no interest is paid, as it represents the arrears of salaries and allowances due to the officers, pensioners, and others and the arrears of prices due to shopkeepers and tradesmen on account of articles supplied to His Highness and his family. On the remaining portion of the debt the State has to pay due interest, which on the aggregate, amounts to over Rs,80,000 a year , at the rate of 12 percent. per annum and more

44. But under an able administrator the debts could be cleared and the state of affairs could be thoroughly improved in the course of a few years. For it would not be difficult for him , on the one hand , to, increase the revenue 30 percent. and, on the other, to reduce the expenditure 25 percent. without causing any real inconvenience to His Highness personally or impairing in any way the efficiency of the administration. Of the numerous sources from which the revenue is derived, if cotton, forest and khedda were entirely brought under khas management and carefully supervised, an increase of not less than a lakh of rupees would be

obtained in the general revenues of the State.

45. Under repeated advices from this office, His Highness has at last consented to bring for the present a portion of the forest mehal under direct management, namely, the portion which consists of the Goomti Ghat, mentioned in the last annual report, and the ghats on the rivers Hoara and Burima. If properly supervised, these three ghats will under khas mannagement yield an increase of not less than Rs,. 25000 a year.

46. Another principal source of revenue is land under plough cultivation. This is mostly let out to persons in taluks and frams. Most of the talukdars and farmers and many of the lease holders of the forest and khedda revenue are either dependents on or connections of the Maharaja, over whom they are capable of exercising considerable influence. They are therefore not much under the control of the officers of the State — a circumstance which acts as a great drawback in the revenue administration being carried on successfully.

47. There is an ungenerous rule in force in the State which prevents resident British subjects from acquiring any right of occupancy in respect of lands held by them in this territory. The rule has been found to be productive of much mischief. It has therefore been brought to the notice of the Maharaja with the view that it may be revised. A revision has been promised by His Highness.

48. There was no improvement in the management of the Maharaja's zemindraris in British territory. Collection, as usual, was difficult and troublesome. In one instance, a serious case of riot attended with murder occurred in thana Chagalnaya, Noakhali, in connection with a matter of distraint of crops, made by the Maharaja's tehsil officers and men. His Highness has thought it advisable to let out in patni a portion of his zemindaris, and has accordingly during the year under report effected the transfer of his right as zemindar in respect of some villages in pergunnhas Dakhinshik and Nurnagar, which have been settled as patni taluks. The Maharaja, however, cannot be well congratulated on his action in thus parting with a portion of his splendid estates, especially when many more desirable means are in existence for materially improving his income.

49. The present annual collection made in the zemindaris is understood to be rupees five lakhs and a half, . while the tehsil expenses and Government revenue come up to Rs. 3,30,000, viz. . Rs. 1,20,000 for the former, and Rs. 2,10,000 for the latter. Thus the zemindaries now yield on the whole a net income of over two lakhs of rupees which might be increased 20 percent under proper management.

50. The Maharaja's office, as usual, has submitted only a statement of receipts. No account of expenditure has been furnished though required. The beneficial results likely to follow from the adoption of a proper system of accounts have been often explained to His Highness ; but the proposal of a return of expenditure being supplied to the Agency is not looked upon by the Durbar with favour. The Prime Minister, however, is now engaged in the preparation of a detailed financial statement, with the view of brining the fiscal arrangements into a state of order.

51. The total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 2,38,724 against Rs. 2,33,831 of the previous year and Rs. 2,32,040 the average of the preceding three years. The revenue showed a total increase of Rs. 15,141 under nine heads, and a total decrease of Rs. 10,248 under eleven, as detailed below, giving thus on the whole a small net increase of Rs. 4,893 compared with the receipts of the previous year.

52. *Land revenue from the plain lands* - There was an increase under this head of Rs. 1,557, the total receipts being Rs. 35,295 against Rs. 33,738 of the previous year. The increase is due to extension of cultivation.

Revenue under this head has been gradually increasing since 1882.

53. *Family tax in the hills.* — The increase under this head is nominal and does not call for any explanation. The receipts for the last two years were Rs. 23,088 and Rs. 23,587. Different tribes are taxed at different rates. Those who supply domestic and other servants to the Maharaja and his household pay at the comparatively small rate of Rs. 3 per family per year; while those who do not do so and live far from His Highness' residence, such as the Reangs, Nowatias, &c. pay at the highest rate prevailing in the State, namely Rs. 8 per family.

54. *Tax on forest produce* — There was an appreciable increase under this head of Rs. 8,005, the total receipts being Rs. 56,902 against Rs. 48,897 of the previous year. The increase is due to renewed settlements in regard to some of the ghats or stations. If the revenue were collected under khas management and not through farmers, as it is done now, the total receipts under this head would be nearly doubled.

55. *Tax on forest produce floated down the Feni* — The amount of Rs. 12,408 shown under this head represents the receipts for the year 1883-84. The collection is made by Government officers in the Forest Department, from whom the Maharaja's share for the year under report has not yet been received.

56. *Tax on cotton and oil-seeds* -- The decrease of Rs. 6,701 under this head is due to low state of the cotton market, brought on by the rather keen competition now existing between cotton and jute, of which due notice is not taken by the Durbar. It is believed that if the administration had in time reduced its present high rate of the duty levied on cotton , it would, by encouraging the sale of the articl, have, in the long run, been a gainer.

57. *Royalty on elephants caught.* -- There was a decrease of Rs. 1,416 under this head, the receipts being Rs.17,692 against Rs.19,108 of the previous year. The decrease is attributable to low state of the market due to want of proper arrangement on the part of the administration as regards the time and place of sale of elephants and the issuing of notices about the same. The number of elephants caught was considerably large. It was on the whole 136, of which, however, many died before being put up to sale.

58. *Buffalo-grazing mehal* — There was a small increase of revenue under this head, amounting to Rs. 627, due to revised settlement of old grazing fields and new settlement of a few fresh ones. No tax is lived on account of bullocks and cows, nor from buffaloes the property of the resident subjects of the State. The rates at which the collection was made were the same as before, namely rupee one a year for a full grown buffalo, and half the rate for a calf. The tax was levied from British subjects only.

59. *Khotagari mehal.*— From this source the sum of Rs. 2,541 was obtained. It was an increase of Rs 653 compared with the receipts of the previous year — a result which is said to be due to revised settlement.

60. The changes in the receipts from the remaining source of revenue were not great and do not deserve to be particularly noticed. The increase in the Adda indicates increase of population in the plains, where on each house the tax, which is similar to the chowkidari tax in the British territory, is levied at the rate of annas twelve a year.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME, AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

61. The Magistrate of Agartala is in charge of the entire police of the State; under him there are three Inspectors, one at each of the three head-quarters stations of Agartala, Sonamura and Koylashar. In accordance to the rules in force in British territory, each thana is placed under charge of a Sub-Inspector and each outpost

under a jemadar or head constable. There are altogether 18 thanas and 4 outposts in the country.

62. In the course of my movement in the interior, I found that some of the officers in charge of police-stations were not duly acquainted with the extent of their territorial jurisdiction. They were therefore liable to commit the mistake of entering into the adjacent British territory and exercising authority there. With a view to provent this, I suggested to the Durbar the advisability of getting every thana and outpost provided with a clear map of its jurisdiction and a list of the villages contained in it. The suggestion has been ordered to be carried out.

63. A guard of special police — perhaps the first of its kind in the history of the State -- was located for a period during the year at Kalamchera in the Sonamura division, where the land revenue farmer had distrained the crops of his tenants, and where for a time public peace was not very safe. The establishment was a small one, and it was maintained at the expense of the farmer.

64. Like the members of the other branches of the Administration, those of the police receive their dues with much irregularity. In some cases they are not supplied with uniforns. The superior officers of the State are not unaware of these wants, but they are unable to remove them on account of financial difficulties.

65. As usual, minor offences against the person and property, chiefly simple hurt, petty theft and mischief, were the most general offences during the year. They were mostly committed in the plains, particularly along the frontier towards the British territory. And in the cases British subjects living along the boundary and holding landed tenures within the State were frequently concerned. In the hills crime is comparatively small, and the people are far from being in any way troublesome.

66. The administration of justice is chiefly conducted by the Thakurs of Agartala. The Munsif, the Magistrate, and the Civil and Sessions Judge are all members of the Thakur families. The Khas Appellate Court, which is the chief court of justice in the State, is presided over by the Jubraj, who is assisted by two Thakurs. These Thakur Judges are generally well-meaning persons, though not possessed of sufficient training and experience. The subdivisional Deputy Magistrates are all Bengalis. But their powers as judicial officers are limited.

67. The superior courts of the State did their work pretty fairly during the year. But the courts of the first instance gave frequent occasions to this office for bringing their action to the notice of the Maharaja. The subdivisional officers are intelligent enough, but they are wanting in experience. The details of the work done in the several courts during the year have been shown in the annexed judicial statements, of which a brief analysis is given in the following paragraphs.

68 *(1) Statement of criminal cases investigated by police* — The number of police cases is decreasing since 1882-83, the figures for the last three years being 172, 156, and 139. The decrease is due to greter care shown by the police in admitting cases , those that are not cognizable being generally rejected. Of the total number of cases reported during the year more than half related to the Agartala division. On the whole, 89 cases or 59.7 percent. were investigated successfully, and 161 persons were arrested and tried, of whom 94 or 59.4 percent. were convicted.

69 *(2). Statement of criminal cases.* — The total number of cases of all descriptions was 625 against 567 of the preceding year. The increase is explained by the fact that in 1883-84 the number of institutions was smaller

than usual, owing to the absence of the subdivisional officers from their stations. Of the number, 218 or nearly 35 percent. were rejected, 22 remained pending, and the rest, i.e., 385 cases, were tried. Of the total number of persons brought to trial, 365 or 53.4 percent. were convicted. The number acquitted was large, being 292 or 42.7 percent. — a result which is chiefly observable in respect of the sub-divisional courts, and is due to the want of sufficient general experience on the part of the presiding officers. The total number of serious cases was only 54, or 8.6 percent. Among them there were, including the number pending from the previous year, 3 cases of murder, 2 cases of culpable homicide, 4 casses of rape, 3 cases of dacoity and 2 cases of roberry, against, respectively 3,2,2,3 and 4 of the preceding year.

70 *(3)Statement showing the result of appeal in criminal cases* — The number of appeals instituted during the year was 52 against 64 of the preceding year. In 25 of them the sentences of the lower courts were confirmed, in 14 they were modified, and in 13 they were reversed, while 1 case remained pending at the end of the year. In the Khas Appellate Court the work, as usual, was small. There were altogether 11 cases before it, of which in 3 the sentences of lower courts were reconfirmed, in 5 they were modified, and in 3 they were reversed. The results of the appeals were, on the whole, satisfactory.

71 *(4) Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned.*—The total number of such cases was 180 against 153 of the previous year, and 182 of the year before. In the former, as mentioned above, number of institutions was generally small, owing to the prolonged absence of the subdivisional officers from their posts. During the year under report, British subjects were complainants in 39 and both complainants and defendants in 47 cases. Including the latter, they were, on the whole, complainants in 86 and defendants in 141 cases. This contrast between their position as complainants and defendants is explained by the fact that the greater number of the cases concering British subjects arise in connection with exportation of forest produce from the hills — a work which is almost entirely carried on by British subjects. The exporters frequently attempt to evade payment of the duty levied by the State, and thus render themselves liable to be tried under charges of theft or mischief according to circumstances. While those who come to rescue them, when they are arrested, and who like them are generally British subjects, are led to commit the offences of rioting hurt and assault. A large number of charges against British subjects therefore generally falls under these heads. During the year under review 180 persons were altogether brought to trial, of whom 90 were convicted, 87 discharged, 1 died, and 2 remained under trial at the close of the year. The acquittal was disproportionately large in the Sonamura and Bilania Courts, owing as mentioned above, to want of sufficient experience on the part of the officers concerned.

72 *(5) Statement of criminal cases in which warrants were issued under the Extradition Act.* — In 2 cases only warrants was thought proper to be issued during the year against 2 persons, 1 of whom was arrested and surrendered; the other, who is a subject of the State, has not been found out by the police on enquiry. Of the 14 persons against whom warrants remained unexecuted at the close of the previous year, 1- a subject of the State — surrendered himself of his own accord, but of the remaining 13 no clue has been found by the police. The two persons surrendered were both brought to trial and convicted.

73 *(6) Statement of cases which were certified for trial in British territory under the Extradition Act.*— The number of such cases was only 7. But none was of any serious character, and with the exception of only 1, in which the defendants were discharged, none was brought to trial in consequence of the non-appearance of the complainants. It seems that the Administration does not take due care to see that cases certified for trial in British territory are properly attended to by the parties concerned.

74 *(7&7A) Statements of civil suits.*— The number of new institutions was 216 against 254 of the preceding year. The decrease is chiefly observable under the head of bond suits, owing partly to the unlitigious character of the people and partly to their easy circumstances, which enabled them in many cases to discharged their debts out of court. Including 91 suits of the previous year, the total number for disposal was 287, of which 247 were disposed of, and 38 remained pending. The aggregate value of the new institutions was Rs 16,479-6-10, or on the average Rs. 76-5 per suit. Nine of these suits only were above Rs. 500 in value. In the whole number there were 118 bond suits, 15 suits for damages, 39 rent suits, 22 possessory, suits, and 13 suits of other descriptions. The total amount of fees realised was Rs. 2,797-12, or on the average Rs. 12-15 per suit.

75 *(8) Statement showing the result of appeals in civil suits.* — There were altogether 46 cases of appeal on the civil side, namely 31 before the lower Appellate Court and 15 before the Khas Appellate Court. Of the former, 29 were disposed of. In 10 the order of the lower courts was confirmed, in 16 it was either reversed or modified, while 2 cases were remanded and was rejected. Of the 15 cases before the Khas Appellate Court, all were disposed of during the year. Considering the small number of appeals brought before the lower Appellate Court, the number that was carried before the Khas Appellate Court was too great.

76 *(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subject were concerned* — The total number of suits in which British subjects were concerned was 89 against 122 of the previous year. The falling off is attributable to the fact that the decrees of the courts of the State cannot be executed in British territory. In 59 of these cases British subjects were plaintiffs, in 14 they were defendants and in 16 they were both defendants and plaintiffs.

JAILS

77. There are altogether 4 jails in the State as in the preceding year, viz., one at Agartala and one at each of the subdivisions of Sonamura, Koylashar and Bilania. The total number of the prisoners at the close of the year in all the jails was 87, and the average daily number was 37.

78. The prisoners are accommodated in thatched buildings, which, with one exception, are enclosed within mat walls. The exception is in the case of the Koylashar Jail, which has a masonry enclosure. The Administration has undertaken to construct a brick built prison a t Agartala. During the year there was only one case of escape from jail, which occurred in Bilania.

79. The prisoners are always leniently treated. The work they are given to do is never hard either in kind or in quantity. As a rule, no corporal punishment is inflicted upon anybody. The rations allowed are fully sufficient. On ceremonial and festive occasions releases are granted to well-behaved convicts. There is no hospital attached to any of the jails. But everywhere there is sufficient arrangement for medical treatment being given to the sick. Altogether 34 prisoners were under such treatment during the year, of whom 33 were cured, and 1 died.

MILITARY

80. The frontier was quite peaceful during the year. The several guard posts maintained for the protection of the country are sufficiently assuring to the people. They are situated, as before, at Dharmanagar, Chirakuti and Kamalpur in the Koylashar division, all of which I visited during the cold weather. The sites of the first two posts are now not so suitable as they were before. Cultivation having extended all around, it is desirable that the guards should be removed more in advance. In the south of the State there are two small posts, one

at Bilania and one at Udoypur and during the raiding season an additional post is maintained at Eksari, all of which were properly garrisoned during the last winter.

81. As will be known from the annexed military return, there are in the service of the State altogether 295 men, rank and file. Of these, however, about a half only are reliable and fit for active duties in the field. It would be well if, instead of Bengalis, the hill-people were more largely employed. There are now, as shown in the return, 152 Bengalis including Hindus, Mahomedans and Christians, 57 Gurkhas, 57 up-country men, and 29 Manipuris, Assamese and Tipperahs. I advised His Highness to enlist a larger number of Gurkhas, at least up to the minimum number of 70 ordered by Government. The Maharaja has accordingly issued instructions to get more men of the class recruited.

82. All the men are not properly disciplined and well equipped; their salaries are not regularly distributed, nor their wants and wishes duly attended to. Owing to these circumstances, the service is not attractive. The supply of arms and ammunition is obtained from British territory on licenses granted by Government. The present stock has run short, and in order to replenish it the Durbar is about to apply for a license for importing a fresh supply.

THE STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

83. There are only a few raised roads in the State, and these are only in Agartala and Koylashar. Footpaths are in existence everywhere, and river communication is available for a good portion of the year in several parts of the country.

84. The road which connects Agartala with the district of Tipperah was repaired during the year. It was levelled and dressed and temporary bridges were put up where necessary. While in one place, about a mile to the west of old Agartala, the construction of a permanent bridge has been undertaken. The road crosses the river Haora, which is not bridged. Communication with old Agartala, where the Maharaja resides, would be comparatively more easy, and the necessity that now exists for constructing a strong bridge over the river would be obviated if a diversion in the course of the stream had been caused by means of a cut, which is understood to be both feasible and only moderately expensive.

85. The pathways lying in the country are narrow and during the rainy season they are overgrown with jungle. They are useful only to the hill-people and to those who are accustomed to move through hills and vales. For armed men, when required to make rapid marches, and for police officers taking prisoners from one station to another, they are unsafe and inconvenient. It is the practice therefore for the troops and for the police when in charge of prisoners to take their passages through the adjacent British territory without the permission of the authorities thereof. The practice is objectionable and has been brought to the notice of the Maharaja, with a view that it may be discontinued.

86. There is no system of good roads in the interior of the State, the wants of the people being supplied, as mentioned before, by footpaths and rivers, and also by elephant tracks. With the establishment of the several subdivisional offices in the interior, the necessity for opening a good system of communication in the State has arisen. For the present, it would be sufficient if Bilania was connected with Udoypur and Udoypur with Sonamura. Udoypur is already connected with Bishalgar and Bishalgar with Agartala. The necessity for connecting Koylashar with Dharmanagar is great. I have frequently pointed out to His Highness the desirability of establishing a regular system of communication in the interior. It is understood that, for the

present, endeavour is being made for connecting Koylashar with Dharmanagar by constructing a road across the Unakuti Hills.

EDUCATION

87. The condition of the schools in the State has not been in any way improved during the year. In their number too there has not been any noticeable increase. This is owing to want of proper supervision on the part of the administration. In my cold-weather tour I visited nearly all the schools and patshalas in the interior, and found that the institutions were languishing for want of proper support and care. Among the schools visited were a girls' patshala in a Manipuri settlement and a small elementary schools in a Kuki village.

88. There were altogether 18 schools with 470 pupils in the State at the end of the year, viz., 16 schools for boys, attended by 444 students, and 2 schools for girls with 26 pupils. Except the subdivisional schools, which have made some progress, all the other institutions are mere patshalas for primary instruction. Amongst the students the Manipuris and the Bengali-Mussalmans were the largest in number; the Thakur's children were no more than 38. In the interest of both the students and the State, it is desirable to improve the position of the Agartala Anglo-Vernacular School. It ought to be raised at least up to the standard of an entrance school, and pupils ought to be allowed to compete at the Calcutta University Entrance Examination from it.

89. The education of the Jubraj and the Bara Thakur, particularly of the former, is being sadly neglected. They are the next heirs to the guddi, and as, such require to be most carefully looked after. Both of them are naturally intelligent, but they are not given any proper training to qualify themselves for the important work they are expected to be called upon to perform sooner or later. They are now grown up young men, and nothing could be more desirable than to allow them full opportunity to go out to see how administration was carried on in the settled districts, and to generally enlarge and mould their minds by moving in proper circles. Advices in this direction have in vain been repeatedly given to His Highness and as often approved of by him. Financial difficulties are always set forth as the reason which prevents such advices being carried out.

DISPENSARIES

90. There has been no improvement in the management of the dispensaries, which were conducted in the same way as before. The Maharaja and the chief executive officers having removed themselves to old Agartola, the head-quarters schools and the dispensary which are situated in this station (New Haveli) are indifferently looked after by the Administration. The wants of neither are properly and fully supplied.

91. The number of dispensaries was 3 in which 4,009 patients were treated against 3,664 of the preceding year. Of this number 3,785 or 94.4 percent. were cured or relieved, 59 or 1.5 died, 75 or 1.9 discontinued their attendance, and 90 or 2.2 remained under treatment at the close of the year. The prevailing diseases were dysentery, diarrhoea, sore and fever. A few sporadic cases of cholera, some of which proved fatal, occurred for a time during the year.

POST OFFICE

92. There is no post office under the administration of the State, nor is one needed at any place. In the interior of the country there is neither any centre of trade nor any important office of the Administration, while the people are illiterate and uncivilized; so no post office is absolutely wanted anywhere in the hills. The subdivisional offices of the States, the police thanas, cotton offices, and bazars are almost all of them situated

close to the border of the British territory and are within easy reach of Government post offices, which are freely used by them.

93. The post office connected with the Agency is rapidly flourishing. It is under the control of the Imperial Postal Department. It was formerly maintained at the cost of the State. Now it is not only self-supporting, but a paying one also. The Maharajah's officers and others use it largely for the purpose of making remittances. During the year under report the sum of Rs. 65,032 was remitted through it in money orders, and Rs. 5,395 in insured covers. Besides small remittances were made, as usual, by means of postal notes.

MISCELLANEOUS

94. The pillars on the common line of the boundary between this State and Sylhet which as reported last year, had been found to occupy wrong places; were during the year under review removed to and set up in their proper position by a Sub-Deputy Collector of Sylhet. Another pillar situated close to thana Mohanpur was similarly found misplaced, having been posted within the boundary of this State. It was therefore removed and correctly set up by the said Sub-Deputy Collector in conjunction with the Magistrate of Agartala.

95. Two small villages in the plains inhabited by Bengalis and belonging to the district of Tipperah were found to be under the possession of the State. The mistake, as soon as it was discovered, was rectified in communication with the Maharajah's office. There is a similar question of wrong possession by the State of two other small villages, which will be settled after local enquiry next cold weather.

96. Another question of a like nature regarding the situation of certain Tipperah Punjas, which had been pending for a long time, was minutely enquired into during the year under report by the Maharaja's officers, with the knowledge and permission of the subdivisional officer of South Sylhet. After making their enquiries, the officers of the State reported that the matter could not be satisfactorily settled, unless the boundary line was duly surveyed and demarcated. The authorities of Sylhet, however, were satisfied that the villages in question were situated within their jurisdiction, and accordingly took possession of them.

97. Some of the masonry pillars on the line of the common boundary of this State and the district of Tipperah are entirely destroyed, while others are in need of repairs. A special report on this subject has already been submitted.

98. The dispute regarding the claims of and the counter-claims against Mr. Larminie has not yet been settled. It is understood that after the appointment of arbitrators, as reported last year, proposals for amicable settlement passed between the parties for a time. But no result having been produced, arbitration has again been resorted to. The Maharaja has instructed his agent to see that the matter may be settled as soon as convenient and, in this view, has sent some of his chief officers to Calcutta, where the arbitration is to take place.

99. In almost every bazar in this State there is a grog-shop, worked by a license holder who pays a nominal revenue, and who therefore is able to sell at a cheap rate the liquor manufactured by him. Several of these grog-shops are situated close to British territory, offering to the inhabitants thereof no small temptation to carry on smuggling. I visited some of them during the cold weather and, in February last, after my return from a tour of inspection, I saw the Maharaja and brought to his personal notice the impropriety of allowing liquor to be manufactured and sold on the borders. The matter has since again come up to His Highness, through

Government, at the instance of the administration of Assam. It has engaged due attention of the Durbar, and I have reason to hope that the shops in question will be removed further from the boundary as advised by the Commissioner.

100. On the recommendation of this office, made at the request of the Committee for the management of the Zoological Gardens, Calcutta, His Highness the Maharaja gave to the Committee during the year a donation of some wild animals, including a full-grown leopard, for which the thanks of the Committee were duly communicated to His Highness.

101. The condition of the Agartala Municipality was for some time past unsatisfactory, in consequence of want of proper care on the part of the officers concerned. It has, however, lately been improved owing to the intelligent supervision of the Bara Thakur who has very properly interested himself in the matter.

102. The clerk of this office, Babu Gobind Chandra Das, is a diligent and careful officer. The manner in which he performed his duties during the year was perfectly satisfactory.

My Dear Maharaja Bahadoor,

It being my function to offer your Highness advice and to endeavour to ensure that the advice is acted up to, I beg your careful personal attention to the following needful reforms, and trust that I may learn that a beginning has been made towards sound and economical administration before I despatch my Annual Report to government.

I — RAJ.

2. The first point is the enormously bloated establishments, which eat into the very vitals of the State. At least twice as many officers and departments are maintained as is necessary; (a) for instance the executive administration at Agartala is duplex, consisting of a Prime Minister and a Secretary, each with his separate office. There can be no objection to your Highness keeping one or even two Secretaries for your private correspondence; but it is obvious that all State affairs should be disposed of in one office under the Prime Minister. It is therefore unnecessary and indeed prejudicial to maintain the Secretary's establishment in a separate office. (b) The printing press is immensely over-manned. It is quite superfluous to maintain a manager on Rs. 100 and an assistant on Rs. 50; one man on Rs. 50 would amply suffice. (c) The medical establishment is also excessive, consisting as it does of a large diplomaed staff besides unlicensed practitioners. The latter should be swept away, as they have little to do and what they do is done badly. (d) The staff of great offices of State at Agartala requires revision and cutting down. It consists of the offices marginally noted - at least three times more than is necessary for the conduct of public business. The establishment actually required is confined to a Prime Minister, who should get Rs. 500 consolidated, a Finance Minister on Rs. 250, and an Assistant on Rs. 150. Home accommodation should no longer be provided for Ministers and others In lieu, a consolidated house allowance of 5 percent on their salary should be made them. The total saving by these reforms would not fall short of Rs. 25,000 per annum.

	Rs.	A.	P.
A Prime Minister costing at least	600	0	0
A Minister on	450	0	0
A Secretary on	200	0	0
A Nij tabil Dewan on	200	0	0
A senior Dewan on	200	0	0
Another on	235	0	0
A Naib Dewan on	150	0	0

3. The members of your Highness's family are all in receipt of allowances as pocket money and in addition have all other expenses paid. This practice is wasteful and pernicious in the extreme. State pensioners should be divided into classes according to their proximity to your Highness, and be allotted separate money pensions to cover all expenses, and they should be specially told that their pensions will die with them. Otherwise the State will be literally eaten up by a horde of hungry idlers. Pension rolls should be opened forthwith, and a special officer placed in charge of the department.

4. With regard to the general administration, reforms are at least equally necessary.

(a) The Bankur mehal, which now yields Rs. 48,000, should be at once brought under khas management, when the receipts would speedily double as has resulted from bringing the cotton mehal under khas management.

(b) The cotton mehal, now Rs. 90,000, could readily be increased to a lakh by paying the chakladars and faridars regularly, inspecting their offices frequently, increasing their number, and choosing them with greater care.

(c) The khedda mehal should also be taken khas or let out to the Indian Govenment. The latter would gladly give Rs. 25,000 cash per annum for the lease, but if your Highness prefers khas management and will place the work in skilled hands, the income would reach nearly 1/2 lakh per annum.

(d) The sal forests require a skilled officer, whose services might be borrowed from our Forest Department, and the framing of rules precluding wasteful and unscientific treatment. In a few years the income from this source would be very large.

(e) Large areas exist within the boundaries of the State uncultivated which would be taken up by ryots from the plain if your Highness would grant them long leases and make small tuccavi advances to enable them to settle.

5. The great want is however, a proper finance system. If your Highness will apply to our Government for the loan of a thoroughly skilled assistant from the Accountant General's Office in Calcutta, the request would be complied with and order would speedily be established.

II-ZEMINDARI.

(a) These splendid properties are grievously over-officered. They are managed by a staff as detailed marginally, whereas a manager with a single assistant on Rs. 600 gross would amply suffice.

	Rs.
A Manager	400
Dewan	250
Neib Dewan	175
Another	50
Superintendent collections	100
Total	1,005

(b) There is no necessity for maintaining a special settlement establishment at Mogra, costing Rs. 150 per mensem. Their work could be done by the tehsildari establishment if properly looked after.

(c) I have small means of judging of the extent and efficiency of the subordinate collecting staff. I should however, from what I have seen, suppose that at least twice as many men on twice as much pay as is necessary are so employed. The total cost of collection, including manager's salary and every expense, should not exceed Rs. 150 on the gross receipts, say Rs. 67,500 per annum.

III. - GENERAL

We are now in a position to frame a financial scheme, which I trust will be embodied in the current budget, and be strictly acted up to, as ruin and disgrace can thus alone be avoided.

	Rs.
Estimated receipts of the hill territory	2,30,000
Deduct all charges of administration at 40 per cent.	92,000
Total	1,38,000
Total receipts of the Zemindaris	4,50,000
Less collection and management expenses at 15 per cent	67,500
	3,82,500
Less Government revenue and ceases	2,12,000
Net balance	1,70,500
Gross balance	3,08,500

Your Highness's domestic and other expenses should certainly not exceed two lakhs per annum, leaving upwards of a lakh for the gradual discharge of the growing burden of debt which threatens to overwhelm the State. The debts are understood to aggregate nine lakhs, on half of which interest to the extent of Rs. 55,000 is charged. The whole could be cleared off in 10 years with due economy, as the more paid off, the less the annual charge for interest becomes.

I sincerely trust that these suggestions will meet Your Highness's earnest, prompt, and personal attention.

F. H. SKRINE,

Magistrate and Political Agent.

Statement showing the amount of revenue derived from all sources in 1884-85

Serial number.	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average receipts for the three years, 1880-81, 1881-82, and 1882-83	Receipts in whole rupees in 1883-84.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1884-85.	AS COMPARED WITH 1883-84.		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.	Land revenue from plain lands	32,942	33,738	35,295	1,557	....	
2.	Family tax in the hills	20,280	23,088	23,587	499	....	
3.	Tax on forest produce	43,222	48,897	56,902	8,005	....	
4.	Do. on the Fenny	6,965	9,217	12,408	3,191	....	
5.	Do on cotton and oil seeds	92,836	68,685	61,984	....	6,701	
6.	Royalty on elephants caught	8,842	19,108	17,692	....	1,416	
7.	Buffallo-grazing mehal	1,381	1,626	2,253	627	....	
8.	Khotagari mehal	2,020	1,888	2,541	653	....	
9.	Kazai (kazifee) mehal	235	483	390	....	93	
10.	Rents on markets	645	736	510	....	226	
11.	Law and justice - fines	2,772	3,908	3,496	....	412	
12.	Ditto Ditto stamp and court fees	7,656	8,859	8,721	....	138	
13.	Ditto ditto - process fees	1,246	1,218	1,118	....	100	
14.	Ditto ditto - cattle pounds	1,354	2,290	1,931	....	359	
15.	Ditto ditto - abkari (excise)	1,281	1,454	1,606	152	....	
16.	Nazars	1,971	983	1,298	315	....	
17.	Adda (chowkidari-tax) mehal	2,524	3,556	3,698	142	....	
18.	Registration	1,351	2,124	1,647	...	477	
19.	Miscellaneous	2,567	1,973	1,647	....	326	
	Total	2,32,040	2,33,831	2,38,724	15,141	10,248	Increase on The whole = Rs. 4893

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR
1885-86

No. 1832, dated Commilla, the 5th July 1886.
From - S.S Jones, Esq, offg. Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah,
To - The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

I have the honour to submit the following remarks with reference to the Administration Report of the Hill Tipperah Agency for the year 1885-86, drawn up by the Assistant political Agent, Baboo Umakanto Das.

2. My own connection with the Agency commenced on the 26th April 1886, after the close of the year under report. Mr. Skrine was the Political Agent throught out the year.

3. The great event of the year has been the appointment of Baboo Deno Nath Sen as minister with powers delegated to him under a power of administration, a translation of which I append.

4. If the minister is allowed scope for administrative reforms, it is possible that the difficulties of the Raj may be overcome, and its finances restored to solvency.

5. The administration of the State cannot be satisfactory until its finances are placed on a sound footing. The sources of revenue at present are 19. Of these, four yield less than Rs. 1,000 each, four over Rs. 1,000 and less than Rs. 2,500, four over Rs. 2500 and less than Rs. 5,000, one yields over Rs. 8,000, and six yield over Rs. 10,000.

6. Arranged in order of importance the major items are -

	Rs.
1. Tax on cotton and oil seeds	64,351
2. Do. on forest produce	57,511
3. Land revenue from plain lands	41,044
4. Family tax in the hills	21,920
5. Royalty on elephants caught	14,558
6. The tolls on the Feni river	12, 190
7. Stamps and court-fees	8,447

7. The tolls on the Feni river are realised by a British Forest Officer, and remitted to His Highness.

8. All other revenue is collected by the officials of the State. There seems to have been some misunderstanding about the realisation of the royalty on elephants caught, but, with that exception, the receipts do not compare unfavourably with those of other years. It is said they would yeild much more under better management.

9. Of the expenditure we learn no details, but the State has an administrative staff at Agartola, five Magistrates' courts (three of which are at sub-divisions), four jails, three dispensaries, a police force, and five frontier posts guarded during the cold weather.

10. Its boundary is now defined beyond dispute except at a few points. There is a great absence of roads, and postal communication is very defective. Education is extremely backward.

11. Much of the country must be very like what the Rajmehal hills were 30 years ago. A great extension of cultivation cannot be expected where wild elephants abound.

12. The contrast between British territory and the hill territory is very marked at their lines of contact. All round the boundary stretches cultivation and a teeming population; within it is scrub-jungle with scanty population. The owner of the soil on both sides of the boundary is the same, but the tenures on which the land is held are different . In the words of the Assistant Political Agent "the lower orders of the people are not, as a rule, willing to come across the border to live in the Maharajah's territory, which is not a very congenial soil for this growing desire for liberty. The only advantage enjoyed by a resident subject of the State, viz, exemption from liability to pay taxes for cutting forest produce for home consumption, is not a sufficient inducement to any but the helpless."

13. State service carries with it another exemption, that of impressment for labour. The Mahomedans in British Tipperah also will not do manual labour other than agricultural. All earthwork is done by immigrants from the west.

14. I am watching carefully for every indication that His Highness' new minister is being granted real power, and is using it to the advantage of the Raj. In one matter I have pointed out to him an error. He applied for permission to have notices served along the border in British territory, that any British subject entering Hill Tipperah, without the permission of the police, would be treated as a trespasser, and that any one found in the Hill territory with forest produce for which he could not account would be treated as a thief. I have replied that his first request cannot possibly be granted, but that I am ready to publish notices of the tolls due for forest produce, but they must be printed and state the places where, and the persons to whom, such dues are to be paid, and similar notices must be published widely in the hills. At present there is reason to believe that one set of tolls is sanctioned and another levied, and that attempts to levy the higher tolls lead to disputes along the border.

15. Of the zemindaries I have little to say. The cases due from them are realised with difficulty. I proposed to discontinue the system of issuing certificates and attaching property worth only a fraction of the sums due, and instead to appoint a cess collector who will collect the sums due under section 99 of the Cess Act.

16. Save for the appointment of the minister, the administration of the State by His Highness during the year has been uneventful. His Highness has accepted advice, given a power of administration, appointed an administrator, and this year will show whether he is really anxious to save his estates and his family from greater difficulties than any which have beset him before. The crucial test will be the payment of just recurring dues, and the gradual liquidation of his heavy debts. At present, pay, pensions, taxes, and cesses are all in terrible arrears.

17. In September 1885 the Jubraj and the Bara Thakur visited Commilla, and were present at the opening of the Bir Chandra Public Library. Their visit was the occasion of great rejoicing and festivity.

18. Baboo Umakanto Das has continued to discharge his duties with intelligence and care.

To - Baboo Deno Nath Sen, Minister to His Highness the Maharajah of Hill Tipperah.

You are hereby invested with full powers to manage all affairs connected with the administration, receipts, and expenditure of my independent territory and zemindari, of which all the officers are placed under you. You shall act in conformity with the rules now in force, or which may be brought into operation hereafter and you shall be responsible for the acts of your subordinates, who shall be accountable to you. You shall act in the following manner.

2. You shall inspect and direct , as well as make rules for the improvement of the several departments, e.g., those connected with the Revenue, Military, Police, Municipal, Education, Medical, Civil, Criminal, Political, Forest boundary guard, Sub-divisional, Cotton mehal, and tolls, and may confirm, transfer, suspend, fine, or dismiss any officer attached to those departments; but the appointment and punishment of officers drawing more than Rs. 100 a month shall be subject to my approval.

3. You are vested with full powers to grant leases to cultivators in my aforesaid independent territory and zemindari, to settle the land, cotton, jalkar, bankar, and phulkar mehals, and to improve the estates generally; but permanent leases, or putnis, or takshishi leases, or such other leases as may lead to a diminution of rights or a decrease in revenue in ijara mehals should not be granted without my sanction. Such sanction should also be obtained when you think it necessary in other important matters connected with settlements.

4. You are vested with powers to grant delay in the payment of debts due to the estate, repayment by instalments, or grant remissions of any portion of such debts: but in important cases my sanction should be obtained.

5. It will be your duty to arrange for the speedy payment to all legitimate debts due by the State, and to regulate expenditure. The arrangements made must be observed by yourself and those placed under you.

6. All petitions, applications for sanction, prayers for special orders, and miscellaneous suggestions relating to the administration of the State will be laid before you in the first instance; and should any petition, &c., come to me direct, it will be forwarded to you. In all these matters you may pass orders according to your discretion.

7. Your presence will be necessary when I discuss the points referred to for orders. On such occasions you will attend alone, or, if necessary, with the officers in charge of the departments concerned.

8. In matters of reference, the subject should be entered in a book with your own suggestions and signature, and if necessary, with the opinious of the officers in charge of departments; and when approved by me, it will be your duty to see that the order is carried out.

9. If time is an object, and the proposal is an important one, you may, pending my sanction, issue orders on the subject on your own responsibility; but no time should be lost in submitting the matter for my sanction, without which your order will be annulled.

10. The orders passed by me on references will be communicated to you under my signature, and such orders and all others shall be issued by you and carried out.

11. All papers relating to the independent territory and zamindari which require my signature shall be laid before me after receiving your signature.

12. Appeals against your orders will not be received by me, except when reduced to writing, and such appeals will be disposed of only after the receipt of a report from you. If you wish it, or if I think it necessary, the appeals will be disposed of in your presence, and in the presence of the officers in charge of the departments concerned.

13. Appeals against the orders of your subordinates shall be before you, and you will decide them after receiving the explanation of the officer concerned.

14. Before the close of each year, you will prepare the budget estimates for the following. When the budgets have received my sanction in the manner mentioned before, you shall not be at liberty to issue orders or to act in contravention thereof, or allow any other person to do so. You will be held responsible for seeing this order carried out. If essentially necessary, my sanction will be obtained in the usual way to any alteration you may propose.

15. You will, as soon after the close of each year as possible, obtain from the officers in charge of departments accounts of receipts and expenditure relating to the independent territory and zemindari, and after preparing a consolidated aggregate account submit it to me with your report.

16. You will frame rules, revise, or alter them for the good management of the several departments, and after obtaining my sanction to such rules, see that they are duly promulgated and strictly acted upon. You shall be held responsible for seeing that this is done.

17. You will receive a monthly salary of Rs. 800.

18. All nuzzars received by you as minister will be credited to the public accounts.

Date 25th Chytra 1295 T.S, (6th April 1886)

No. 370, dated Agartala, the 28th June 1886.

From - Baboo Umakanto Das, Assistant Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,

To - The offg. Magistrate, Tipperah, and ex-office Political Agent , Hill Tipperah.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the general administration of the State of Hill Tipperah for the year 1885-86.

2. During the year crops were not very plentiful all over the State; but public health and peace remained nevertheless good. Heavy rains in June interfered with the joom cultivation in general, while the downpours of September injured the cotton crops in particular. The material condition of the hillfolk therefore was not quite so prosperous as in the preceding year. The people of the plains, however, who are about one-third of the entire population of the country, fared much better, their chief crop (paddy) having been abundant.

3. The work of the administration continued in its former unsatisfactory condition, which, as stated in previous reports, was the result of His Highness' want of full confidence in his officers and of his desire, therefore, for retaining in his own hands all real administrative powers - a desire which could not fail to prove harmful, as it tended to cause almost every work to be at a standstill. Accordingly, more strenuous efforts than ever were made by the Agency to get a qualified head officer appointed for the State, and to have him vested with sufficient powers for independent action. After a good deal of deliberation and thought, which occupied some months, the Maharajah at length made up his mind to employ such an officer, and selecting Baboo Deno

Nath Sen, Assistant Inspector of Schools, Dacca, applied, in December last, for the loan of the Baboo's services under the usual rules on the subject. Orders on the application have not yet been received; but, pending final sanction of Government, the Baboo has been permitted to join the Raj. He joined it at the close of the year, when he was appointed to be His Hignness' minister on Rs. 800 a month, with full powers of supervision and control over the affairs of the State and the Zemindaries.

4. It is too soon now to speak anything about the Baboo's work; but the amount of zeal and intelligent interest with which he has applied himself to the study of his business is creditable. He is anxious to throughly re-organize and reform the administration, and for the present is engaged in -

(a) Preparing a proper budget showing separately the expenses of the administration and those of the Maharajah's household.

(b) Arranging for the establishment of an audit office and prescribing a regular system of accounts.

(c) Making a proper division of work and selecting officers from the existing staff to be entrusted with, and held responsible for, the management of one or more particular departments of the administration.

(d) Taking steps for increasing the revenue of the State, and for this purpose bringing for the present some of the Bankar Ghats either under Khas management or under re-settlement.

TOURS

5. I was out in camp for 91 days on the whole. In the beginning of the year I was on Sonamura observing the proceedings of the State officers in connection with the khedda work and inspecting some of the boundary pillars. The Khedda was evidently mismanaged. It was let out in farm by the Prime Minister. But the terms which that officer proposed, and which the farmer accepted, had not been timely sanctioned by the Maharajah. The farmer's men fearing to lose the season commenced work on the authority of a letter signed by the Prime Minister, but without obtaining a regular potta; and when a large herd of elephants was caught and brought to Sonamura, a dispute arose between the farmer's men and the local officers regarding the rate at which those of the elephants that were not sold on the spot were to be valued. After a good deal of negotiations, the Prime Minister's rate, namely, Rs. 125 per foot, which was accepted by the farmer, was allowed to stand good. Meanwhile, the elephants - about 100 in number, which could not be removed from the State before the settlement of the question - were put to utmost hardship for want of sufficient food at the place several of them soon died in consequence - a loss for which and for other reasons the farmer gave up the Khedda. The State thus become a loser in its turn; for during the year no work was done there, as good men capable of carrying on Khedda operations in a large area, such as the Khedda field in question is, are not easily obtained, and the State itself is unable to undertake the work for want of funds.

6. In September I accompained the Jubraj and the Bara Thakur, the two next heirs to the Guddi of the State, in their journey to Commilla, which they undertook on the recommendation of your predecessor. During their short stay of about a week at Commilla, they inspected the local courts, jail, the schools and also the public library, at the inauguration of which they were present. The visit proved beneficial to both of them, particularly to the Jubraj, who, though about 26 years old, had never left the precincts of Agartola before. Availing myself of the opportunity, I paid a short visit to Sonamura and inspected the bund made at the suggestion of this office for protecting against inundation the adjacent low paddy lands in British territory.

7. In January, February, and March I made a long tour of general inspection in the interior of the State, observing the condition of the people and the working of the people and the working of the various offices and institutions of the administration. In Bilania I enquired about the disputes then existing for a long time between the British subjects of the neighbourhood and the local officers of the State in connection with the settlement and collection by the latter of revenue from lands held by the former. As it usually happens in a general case of disagreement of the kind, both the sides were more or less in the wrong. The ryots in many cases wanted to evade due payment, while the tehsil officers not unfrequently endeavoured by hard measures to collect either more than what was actually due, or more than what the people were able to pay. In consulation with the Sub-divisional Officer of Bilania, I took steps for the settlement of the disputes which now are not known to exist.

8. Towards the close of the year I moved for some days amongst those Tipperahs of the Agartala division who, from information received at head-quarters, were supposed to be suffering from scarcity. On observation, however, I was agreeably surprised finding the people in a bettter condition than had been anticipated. They were not in actual want but only in apprehension of falling into it, as their stock of rice, which was not sufficient owing to short produce, had nearly been exhausted. It was understood, however, that if they carefully applied themselves to the manufacture of bamboo mats and baskets, and to cut and export forest produce more largely than usual, they would be able to tide over any difficulty — that might arise.

9. All the three Sub-divisional Officers of Sonamura, Bilania, and Koylashar made prolonged tours of inspection in their respective jurisdictions. They have now acquired a good deal of local experience. The chief officials of Agartola, either executive or judicial, could not make it convenient to go out in camp during the year.

WEATHER AND CROPS

10 The quantity of rain registered at the Agency was 76.54 inches, being 6.18 inches more than the fall of the previous year, and 4.66 inches less than the average of the preceding three years, as the following account will show :-

Months	Average fall for the three years 1881-82, 1882-83 and 1883-84	Total fall in 18884-85	Fall in 1885-86
April	4.34	7.41	5.57
May	11.96	11.90	6.73
June	15.25	15.58	24.05
July	11.92	12.69	7.97
August	12.66	4.92	9.50
September	12.81	6.74	14.02
October	4.51	6.36	4.35
November	.77	2.01	.35
December	1.66	....	.....
January	.38	....	....
February	1.18	1.63	....
March	3.76	1.12	4.00
Total	81.20	70.36	76.54

11. It will be seen from the above that in May, in which rain is much required for the cultivation of the soil, the fall was scanty, while in June the downpour was excessive. In July again the fall was below the average, but in August and September it was above it. This unequal distribution was somewhat injurious to cultivation, and therefore harmful to the general prospects of the country which is purely agricultural.

12. But except joom paddy and cotton, no other crop seemed to have suffered much. In the hills the outturn of till (oil-seeds) was plentiful, and in the plains paddy was produced nearly as abundantly as ever, while pulses, tobacco, and sugarcane were also pretty good. The failure of cotton does not, however, seem to be entirely due to unfavourable weather. It is to a considerable degree due also, as will be pointed out in the sequel, to want of proper attention on the part of the administration.

13. It will be known from the table given above that, although there was little or no rain for nearly four months successively, and although the fail in the remaining eight months was remarkably disproportionate, the general health of the people continued yet good. There was no outbreak of any epidemic anywhere. But, as remarked last year, the rainfall noted above is not a sufficient index of the general state of the weather in the whole country. The fall was registered only in the Agency, the administration not being yet able to arrange for measuring rain in any station in the interior.

14. The material condition of the people, though slightly affected by the partial failure of rice and cotton, was yet fair. The unbroken state of freedom from internal disturbance and external oppression, which the country has been enjoying for a series of years, has generated in the minds of the people a sense of security which itself is conducive to their general prosperity. The people are now more settled in their habitation and more ready to invest their little savings in silver ornaments and brass utensils. Indeed, the use of the latter is gradually increasing both in respect of the quality and quintity of the articles. The people of the plains are chiefly Mahomadans of the lower orders, whose chief employment is agriculture. As an indication of their easy circumstances may be cited the fact that, unlike their fellow brethern in British territory, they as a rule, are unwilling to serve for hire, but are nevertheless anxious to have more for name than for pay: some sort of service in connection with the administration of the State, as such service secures them exemption from impressment for labour.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

15. Nothing noticeable took place during the year under this head. As long as the State is unable to grant material help in the shape of tuccavi allowances, medical aid, provision for the supply of good drinking-water, and as long as arrangement is not made for conferring upon the permanent rights in respect of the lands reclaimed by them, no large influx of population can be expected in the country. Another chief drawback is the want of full confidence in the administration of the State on the part of the people living in the adjacent British districts, from which only immigrants are likely to come. This want cannot be hoped to be removed before a constitutional and settled form of government is established in the country. It is remarkable that in the long and extensive belt of the semi-cultivated plain lands extending from Noakholly to Sylhet, there is, with one solitary exception, not a single hamlet occupied by the upper classes of the people, although on the other side of the boundary, but close to it, there are numerous large and thriving villages of the kind, the inhabitants of which owe their prosperity chiefly to the existence of the State. The solitary exception alluded to is a small Brahmin village in Koylashar which has been kept up by the fostering care of the late Sub-divisional Officer of the place, and now Dewan at Agartola, Baboo Durga Prasad Gupta.

16. The lower orders of the people also are not, as a rule, willing to come across the border to live in the Maharajah's territory, which is not a very congenial soil for their growing desire for liberty. The only advantage enjoyed by a resident subject of the State, viz, exemption from liability to pay taxes for cutting forest produce for home consumption, is not a sufficient inducement to any but the helpless.

17. The system of land revenue prevailing in the State also acts as a deterrent in the matter of immigration. No ryot, it is said, can acquire any right of occupancy under any circumstances. Permanent settlement with the actual cultivators is almost unknown. The farming system is allowed to be carried to an enormous extent, and farmers are selected not from persons fit by their position and qualities, but from amongst the favourites of the Court, who, as a rule, allow their farms to pass over to the hands of others; and the natural result is that, want of permanency of any one's interest in the soil, there is generally want of good understanding between the cultivators and the actual collectors of revenue — a want which is most prejudicial to the cause of immigration.

PRICES OF FOOD-GRAINS AND LABOUR.

18. The following table shows the average rates of prices of the principal articles of food and of skilled and unskilled labour which prevaied during the year :-

FOOD GRAINS.	Average price of 1881-82, 1882-83 and 1883-84			Price in 1884-85			Price in 1885-86		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice (best sort)	1	14	0	3	0	0	3	6	0
Rice (common)	1	7	0	2	4	0	2	6	0
Wheat	3	12	0	3	4	0	3	4	0
Gram	2	14	0	2	12	0	2	10	0
Salt	4	2	0	3	10	0	3	10	0
Labour									
Skilled :-									
Mason	13	4	0	14	0	0	14	0	0
Smith	13	4	0	14	0	0	14	0	0
Carpenter	13	4	0	14	0	0	14	0	0
Unskilled :-									
Agriculturist	7	8	0	7	8	0	7	8	0
Day labourers	6	0	0	6	8	0	6	0	0

19. It will be seen that the price of rice, which was already high, rose higher during the year. This, as mentioned in previous reports, was advantages to the cultivators of the plains, inasmuch as they sold and never purchased the articles. The increase is owing to short produce of joom paddy in some parts of the hills, which obliged the hillfolk to obtain their supplies from the plains. It is not owing to increase in exportation. Indeed, in consideration of apprehended distress amongst the Hill Tipperahs, the executive of the State once thought of stopping exportation of rice — an idea which I could not support and which was not carried out.

20. In the price of the other articles there was no noticeable change, while in that of labour there was no change at all. Local labour is comparatively small; all the artisans, smiths, and carpenters, and also the greater portion of the day-labourers employed in the country are obtained from the adjacent British districts.

MANUFACTURES AND MINES.

21. In a hilly country like this, it is not improbable that there should be mines of different kinds. But coal mines only have been discovered, and the coal on examination has been found good. These mines are known to exist in different parts of the State. But the size of none has been ascertained, nor the quantity of coal likely to be got estimated. Facilities for transport are said to be small. Two years ago silver was found in the Lalmai hills, in the district of Tipperah, which belong to the Maharajah. But the cost of getting it was exceedingly great compared with its value.

22. In point of manufacture, the country is poor. Want of enlightenment on the part of the people, coupled with want of encouragement on the part of the administration, is the chief cause of this. Naturally the country is rich in many ways. Cotton, salwood, ivory, garjan, resin, bamboos, canes, and other valuable articles are obtainable in abundance. If it were not for want of skilled labour and capital, there could be factories in respect of each of these items of natural produce. A few kinds of coarse cotton fabrics required for locals consumption and some rough bamboo mats and baskets are now the chief manufacture of the State.

23. The cotton fabrics, though coarse, are interesting for their curiosity and for the amount of primitive ingenuity they exhibit. The chief of them are the poeris and the pachras, which are useful to the public as rugs and bed sheets. A small trade is carried on in them and also in bamboo baskets and mats. In the plains molasses are manufactured by the Bengali subjects of the State, and daos, or hill knives, by blacksmiths of the neighbouring British districts.

FOREST

24. The splendid sal forest of the Udoypur division continued to be looked after as indifferently as before. Owing to the want of a capable head officer, no original work of any kind was undertaken in any department. The forest, if carefully worked, ought to be able to yield a considerable amount of revenue. There is at present no regular forest department in the administration. One will have to be organized. It is expected that the new minister will pay due attention to the subject.

25. Direct management of the forests may, in the present financial difficulties of the State, be inconvenient, as construction of roads and adoption of other means for the carriage of timber from the interior will be expensive. But for a time they might as well be farmed out, and even then a good deal of revenue might be secured without incurring any contingent expenses. It is said that of the vast numbers of sal trees contained in them, about 20,000 are already fit for being cut and about 10,000 are expected to be so fit every year on the average. As these forests are within a few miles of the river Gumti, which is the natural outlet for their products, speculators cannot be wanting to take farms on suitable terms.

26. At present the reserved forests do not yield any income. On the other hand, the maintenance of guards and other contingencies entail no inconsiderable amount of cost; and there being private forests in the Maharajah's zemindaries in continuation of the reserves, sal tress of the latter are stolen away in large numbers, and, when found out are decleared to belong to the former. Thus, thefts are systematically

committed, which frequently pass unpunished alike to the discredit and loss the administration.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

27. The chief articles of trade of the country are —

Exports - The various kinds of forest produce, cotton, til (oil-seeds), wild elephants, parrots, dug-outs, molasses, bamboo mats, and baskets, &c.

Imports - The various kinds of food-grains (except rice), piece-goods, hardware, tobacoo, dry fish, sugar, liquor, fancy things, &c.

No statistics are taken of trade carried on in the country. But it is estimated that during the year under report, the exports on the whole were of the value of about Rs. 6, 00,000, against Rs. 6,26,000 of the previous year. The small decrease of Rs, 26, 000 was due to the reduced state of the elephant market.

28. Cotton is taken to Narayangunge whence it is transported to Calcutta for final shipment to Europe. The entire quantity exported during the year is estimated at about 20,000 maunds, being about 4,000 maunds less than the export of the previous year. The decrease, which is attributable to short produce, would be considerably greater, if the undisposed of cotton of the preceding year was taken out of account.

29. Hill bamboos are exported to the neighbouring districts, to which also are taken thatchaing grass, canes, and timber. Elephants are taken by the people of Sylhet and by the up-country men. The number exported during the year was 130 of the aggregate value of about Rs. 70,000 against 114 elephants of the value of about a lakh of rupees of the previous year. The decrease in value is owing to the low state of the market. Dug-outs are constructed by the class of hill people called Reangs, who sell them to Bengali tradesmen of the districts of Noakholly and Tipperah, where they are chiefly exported.

30. Of the imports, almost all come from the neighbouring districts; European liquor is generally imported from Calcutta, while piece-goods mostly come from Dacca; dry fish is in great demand in the State and a brisk trade is carried on in it all the year round. Brass manufactures are now being pretty largely imported and so is kerosine oil. Umbrella is slowly finding its way to the interior of the hills.

31. Of the articles of food, rice, and also, to some extent, vegetables, chillies, and molasses do not require to be imported; as the produce of the country is sufficient to meet the demands of the people. Tobacco is grown in the plains, but not in the hills, where the demand for it being large the supply has to come from outside. Gram, pulses, and wheat are all imported; the last is used chiefly by the up-country men in the service of the State.

32. The export trade of the country might be considerably improved if facilities of communication were given to the tradesmen. The rivers by which all forest produce has to be exported are difficult of navigation, being in several places blocked up by logs of wood, while their sides are covered with almost impenetrable jungle. In the matter of exportation of forest produce, there are other difficulties besides. The rates of export duty fixed by the administration are frequently changed by the farmers without the knowledge and permission of the executive of the State - a circumstance which often causes unpleasantness and sometimes rupture between the collectors and the payers of the tax. This and similar other arbitrary proceedings on the part of the farmers should be checked.

33. Except the salwood tract of the Sonamura division, which is a reserve, the whole country is an extensive open forest. It is considered almost inexhaustible; and people are allowed to cut and export the produce ad libitum, except in respect of jarul, nageshar, and a few other kinds of valuable timber, regarding which there are some restrictions. Steps should be taken for registering the trade. This might easily be done by the Sub-divisional Officers in whose stations the principal toll offices are situated. The work should entail no extra cost, as some of the men attached to the sub-divisional offices could, without difficulty, be told off for the purpose.

34. The development of the import trade is checked by the various kinds of petty taxes levied by the State. Importers of goods are generally (a) the Choaris; (b) the Beparis; and (c) the settled mahajans or shop-keepers. The first, who carry the goods on their own heads, have to pay each a tax of Re. 1 a year. The second, who convey the articles in boats, pay an annual duty of Rs. 2 to Rs. 30 according to the length of the river and other circumstances; while the third, who carry on their business in fixed shops and markets, are liable to pay a license-tax similar to that levied in British territory. In order to prevent smuggling of cotton and trade in contraband articles, it may be necessary, in a hilly and frontier country like this, to have some check upon the free passage of tradesmen. But considering the circumstances of the hill people, who are generally extremely poor, and upon whom the burden of all such taxes ultimately falls, it is desirable that the matter should be treated not as a source of profit to the State, but only as a means for maintaining the required check. The license-tax which is levied in the Udoypur division only ought to be discontinued. The country is far from being fit for it.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING

35. There is hardly anything like public opinion in the country, and so the feeling of the people on any general or special neasure cannot be easily gauged. But as far as can be judged from outward appearances, it seems that those who are interested in the welfare of the State are satisfied at the appointment of a Head officer for the administration — an appointment from which they hope to see a favourable turn of the state of affairs generally, and of the fruitless water question in particular.

36. That question, thought it was not much agitated during the year, is far form being given up by His Highness and by those who owe their aggrandizement to it. No noticeable mischief was done in connection with it, but several of the useless persons who got into His Highness' service in consequence of their having joined in the movement were allowed to continue in their sinecure posts.

37. The abolition of trade in slavery reported in previous years has given universal satisfaction to the hill people, from amongst whom slaves were used to be taken. The action taken by the Maharajah in this matter has always been generous.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

38. The chief fact for notice under this head is the appointment of Baboo Deno Nath Sen as head minister with sufficient powers for carrying on the work of the administration. This appointment means the abolition of the post of the old minister, Baboo Sambhu Chandra Mukherjee.

39. It is not yet full three months that the new minister has been appointed, but the amount of change that he has already been able to effect in the general administration is creditable to him. Attention has properly been

first directed to the improvement of the finances. The foremost step taken for this purpose is the organization of a regular Account Department. The office of the Secretary, which, as reported in previous years, was unnecessary, has been virtually abolished, and the Secretary has been given the charge of the new Account Department.

40. A scheme has been made for a proper division of work. Hitherto every one of the chief officers had to do almost the same thing over, and nearly every matter had to go up to His Highness for final sanction - an arrangement under which nothing was used to be done either timely or properly. Now every officer has the entire charge of one or more departments, for the proper management of which he is strictly held responsible. This is no doubt a good thing as far as it goes; but there is hardly work enough for the numerous superior officers now employed at Agartola. There are at present five such officers, of whom three would be quite sufficient for the proper discharge of every business. It is expected that with experience the minister will see the propriety of reducing the number of the superior hands.

41. The prime minister yet remains in name and works in subordination to the minister - an anomaly which can be explained only by the fact that His Highness is too good a person to deprive the former of his title. As to power for action, he had already previously been deprived of it, owing, as reported in previous years, to want of good feeling between him and the Secretary. The voice of the people in general is as strong in favour of the former as it is against the latter.

42. Another important administrative change about to be effected soon is the separation of the Maharajah's shangshar, that is, his household affairs from the affairs of the State. At present the higher officers of the administration not unfrequently required to spend their time and energy in attending to the calls and requisitions of the members of the Maharajah's family - a state of things which seriously interferes with the work of the general administration. As a remedy the separation of the shangshar with an intelligent and capable Thakur of Agartola at its head was suggested by me to the late prime minister, Nazir Dina Bandhu Deb. Unfortunately he was unable to carry it out. The present nominal prime minister, Thakur Dhananjoy Deb, to whom the suggestion was repeated, found himself equally unsuccessful. The new minister, Baboo Deno Nath sen, however, hopes to be able to accomplish it.

43. Hitherto the sudder office at Agartola was the chief administrative office of the State, and was used to be presided over by the prime minister. Baboo Deno Nath Sen has made it a subordinate office, placing it under the dewan in charge of the Revenue Department, while he has created a new office for himself, which is to be an office of general direction, control, and supervision. He has thus properly kept himself free from the immediate charge of any particular department, and will therefore be able to do a good deal of inspectional work both in head-quarters and in the interior - a work which is absolutely necessary.

44. Mr. E. F. Sandys continued to hold the post of the manager of His Highness' zemindaries, and to act as his agent in the transactions relating to the Balishira hills in Sylhet. The matter relating to these hills has now been carried to the court. Baboo Deno Nath Sen, who is authorised to look after the zemindaries, as well as the State, proposes to visit the former after he has been able to put the affairs of the latter into a condition of working order.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

45. During the year no improvement was effected under this important head. His Highness often expressed

a desire to curtail expenditure, and at one time issued a series of orders for the purpose. These orders, however were too general to be of any practical use, and it is not known that they were ever duly carried out. The prime minister spent a good deal of time, thought, and energy in the preparation of an elaborate budget, which, too. is not known to have been sanctioned by His Highness. In September last, the Chakla officers of Commilla submitted a financial statement proposing some reductions and showing the expenditure, it is said, at $14^{1}/_{2}$ percent on the gross collection, and got it approved by the Maharajah. The proposed reduction affected chiefly some of the old officers who had to be dismissed. The Maharajah sactioned the proposal at the time, but as was expected, reinstated the dismissed persons afterwards.

46. The financial difficulties continued as great as ever, owing, as reported last year, to the expenditure being largely in excess of the income, and to the almost overwhelming amount of debts. In consequence of these difficulties, not only no work of reform could be undertaken, but the ordinary wants also could not be met with any degree of regularity. Cases were not unfrequent in which useless and unnecessary employees had to be retained in the service merely because the arrears of their salaries and allowances could not be paid. Many of the members of the Raj family and their relatives had to undergo an amount of hardship that was striking. The Agency was moved by several claimants who had failed to realise their dues from the State.

47. This unsatisfactory state of affairs is not due to any want of means. It is entirely the result of want of proper management. Now that a capable officer has been appointed at the head of business, it is expected that improvement will take place within a reasonable time. This officer, as already separately reported, has taken up the revenue department for revision and reform, and properly commenced the business with the forest or the Bankar mehals.

48. It was mentioned in the last annual report that on repeated advice from this office, the Maharajah had agreed to bring under khas management that portion of the Bankar mehal, which consisted of the Gumti, Burima and Haora ghats. It was also stated that if the three ghats or toll stations were directly and properly managed, there would be a clear increase of about Rs. 25,000 to the annual revenue. During the year under report, no earnest step was taken by the administration to carry out the work. The new minister, however, took up in hand this important business as soon as he was appointed. He does not, as a rule, advocate khas management, as he is afraid proper supervision could not easily be arranged for. He has, however, revised the settlement of two of the three ghats and secured thereby an increase of Rs. 9,800 to the annual revenue. A portion of the lot in which the two ghats are comprised has, however, been kept khas, as it is somewhat difficult of management; and from it an annual income of Rs. 3.000 is expected. Thus on the whole, the revised arrangement of this single lot is likely to give a clear gain of Rs. 12,800. An equal amount of net increase is expected from the third ghat, viz, the one on the Gumti which will be re-settled soon.

49. Similarly, most substantial increase can be obtained from the remaining ghats under careful settlement or khas management. Khas management is by all means preferable to management through farmers. But if for want of reliable officers or for want of sufficient knowledge of the resources of the ghats, the latter is adopted, steps should be taken to obtain correct statistics of the articles on which duties are levied. Re-settlements should be made as soon as possible, for immense loss is being sustained under the present arrangement, as the following table will show :-

NAME OF GHATS	Present revenue	Probable revenue	Probable increase
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Mohori	12,000	19,000	7,000
2. Gumti	12,000	26,000	14,000
3. Haora	11,000	21,000	10,000
4. Khoyajuri	4,000	4,000	.....
5. Sonayi	.....	3,000	3,000
6. Khoyai	6,000	15,000	9,000
7. Dhalyi	5,000	8,000	3,000
8. Manu	6,000	16,000	10,000
9. Thaljuri	1,300	6,000	4,700
Total	57,300	1,18,000	60,700

50. The figures showing the probable revenue as given in the above table represent the lowest estimate. Indeed, the increase likely to be obtained from the Bankar ghats and, under proper supervision, from the Cotton Mehal, will be quite sufficient for meeting the present deficit, which, as reported last year, amounts to over a lakh of rupees. From the Kheda Mehal, too, a considerable amount of revenue is expected. Every endeavour should therefore be made to sufficiently improve the revenue administration and thereby to make the State capable of paying its own costs and the cost of His Highness' household. It ought not to be, as it now is, dependent upon the income from the zemindaries which should entirely be set apart for the liquidation of debts, and for meeting the expenses of developing the resources of the country.

51. It is very strange that while there are so many easy and splendid means for vastly improving the revenue of the State, the administration should not have taken advantage of them, but, on the other hand, it should have sanctioned the imposition of such unsuitable taxes as the license tax and the road and public work cesses levied in the Udoypur division, for which the country is quite unprepared, and for which the people do not receive the slightest return.

52. The zemindaries in Roshnabad and Sylhet (the latter was not included in the Political Agent's account of last year) yield, on the whole, an income of from five to six lakhs of rupees. According to the road cess papers they should yield more than eight lakhs. The local officers, however, are not hopefull of being able to materially increase the present income. The total collection at any rate should leave a clear profit of not less than three lakhs, which, if set apart for the liquidation of debts and the introduction of reforms, would make the State free from all embarrassments in the course of few years.

53. The burden of the debt may, in the meantime, be considerably reduced by borrowing from some big capitalist a sufficiently large sum at a low rate of interest, and paying off all such debts as now bear interest at the rate of 12 percent. or upwards. Under an arrangement of this kind, the present amount of aggregate interest which is not less than Rs. 80,000 a year may be reduced by half, or in other words, a saving of Rs. 40,000 or more may be effected. For this purpose the new minister has already opened negotiations with intending money-lenders.

54. Should the present income of the zemindaries be set apart for payment of debts, there would be no

necessity for granting putni settlements, as the salami to be obtained under such settlements, which is proposed to be devoted to the same object, would no more be required for the purpose. These splendid properties, which have been directly held by the Raja for a long series of generations, should be improved and well managed, but ought not to be alienated from it unless such a course is inevitable. Another chief objection to the grant of putni settlement is the want of reliable survey and jummabundi papers, without which no permanent settlement can be fairly effected.

55. The year was not a good one for the ryots, as owing to damage by inundation, their paddy crops were not full. Collection, nevertheless, was pretty fair, and a debt of nearly Rs. 80,000, about half in capital and half in interest, was paid up. On the other hand, however, a considerable amount of new debts was incurred for paying the Government kists.

56. No account of expenditure has been received from the Maharaja's office, which, it seems, does not mean to furnish one, considering perhaps that it would be humiliating to the State to supply it - a consideration for which there is evidently no ground, especially as the private and household expenses of the Maharajah were proposed to be shown in a lump sum and not in detail. But the Maharajah also thinks on the subject in the same way. I have therefore suggested that the Durbar might publish every year an annual report of its administration, showing, among other thing, the income and expenditure of the State, and furnish the Agency with a copy of it.

57. The receipts of the year, of which an account has been supplied by the Durbar, amounted on the aggregate to Rs. 2,43,824, being Rs. 5,160 in excess of the receipts of the previous year. There was a gross increase of Rs. 12,188 against a gross decrease of Rs. 7,028, as will be known from the annexed revenue return, of which a detailed explanation is given below.

58. *Land revenue from the plain lands* - There was an increase of Rs. 5,749 under this head, the receipts being Rs. 41,044, against Rs. 35,295 of the previous year, and Rs. 32,616, the average of the preceding three years. The increase is due to renewed settlements of certain estates.

59. *Family tax in the hills.* — The revenue from this source fell from Rs. 23,587 to Rs. 21,920, showing a decrease of Rs. 1,667 due to reduced condition of the hill people on account of partial failure of their joom crops. The collection, however, as the return will show, was above the average of the preceding three years.

60. *Tax on forest produce* - There was a small increase of Rs. 609 under this head, which does not require any explanation. The collection was Rs. 57,511, against Rs. 56,902 of the previous year and Rs. 46,873, the average of the preceding three years. As mentioned before in paragraph 49, the forest revenue of the State is capable of being very greatly improved, more than twice the amount of the present income being likely to be obtained under proper arrangements. The new minister has very sensibly taken up this matter first in hand, and has already revised the settlement of two out of the existing nine forest ghats securing thereby, as already stated, a net increase of Rs. 12,800 to the annual revenue.

61. *Tax on forest produce floated down the Feni* - The Feni revenue station continued to remain under the management of the Government Forest Department. The revenue for the year under report has not yet been received. The sum Rs. 12,190, shown in the return, represents the income of the previous year.

62. *Tax on cotton and oil-seeds.* - Oil-seeds were grown in abundance, while a portion of the cotton crop

ground the officers concerned were fined, and out of the sum thus realised compensation was awarded to the sufferers who were resident British subjects.

68. A new police outpost was established during the year on the side of the Kurti Cherra, which is the boundary between the Karimganj sub-division in Sylhet and Hill Tipperah. The chief object of locating a police guard at the place which is mostly uninhabited is to protect the boundary from being encroached upon by British subjects. There are now going on two cross cases of such encroachment - one in the Court of the Deputy Magistrate of Koylashar, Hill Tipperah, and the other in that of the Sub-divisional Officer of Karimganj, Sylhet. The interest of justice would be better served if all such cross cases were tried in one place.

69. The administration of justice, both civil and criminal, was in the same hands as before. This important department is very much in need of reform. There is no Code of Procedure worth the name. Equity is the guiding principle of the officers who, though free to obtain light from laws and rules in force in British territory, labour under the greatest of all disadvantages - want of proper culture and training.

70. The amount of work done by the various courts of the State during the year has been shown in detail in the accompanying judicial returns of which the following is a summary :-

71. *(1) Statement of criminal cases investigated by the police* — The Maharajah's office has shown in this return not only cases which were cognizable and instituted before the police, but also those that were instituted before the Magistrate and made over to the police for investigation. Hence, the rather abnormal rise of the total number of cases from 139 to 269. The police were successful in their investigation in 206, i.e., 73.8 percent. of the cases, in which 379 persons were altogether arrested and brought to trail, of whom 257 or 67.8 percent. were convicted.

72. *(2) Statement of criminal cases* - Including those pending from the previous year, there were altogether 652 cases of all kinds, against 625 reported last year. There was thus a small increase of 27 cases, for which no explanation is required. The total number of serious cases was 41, or 6.3 percent, among which were 2 cases of murder, 2 cases of culpable homicide, and 2 cases dacoity. Altogether 427 cases, or 65.5 percent, with 776 persons, or 1.8 person per case, were tried. Of the remaining 225 cases, 190, or 29.1 percent, were rejected and 35, or 5.4 percent, with 43 persons, remained under trial at the close of the year. Of the 776 persons, 507, or 65.3 percent, were convicted, 262, or 33.4 percent, were acquitted or discharged, and 7, or 9 percent, died.

73. *(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in criminal cases* - There were in all 81 cases of appeals, of which in 28 or in about one third of the number the sentences appealed against were confirmed - a result which is not creditable to the Lower Courts. In the Khas Appellate Court also, only 4 cases were confirmed in a total number of 14.

74. *(4) Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned* - The number of cases in which British subjects were concerned rose from 180 to 223. The charges against them were principally hurt, making false compalints, criminal trespass, extortion, theft, rioting, and smuggling of cotton. British subjects were complainants in 49 cases, both complainants and defendants in 47, and only defendants in 174, the last showing an increase of 33 cases compared with the number of the previous year. The increase is due partly to the unwillingness of the people in certain parts to pay the forest dues levied by the State, and partly to the working of the ungenerous rule mentioned last year by which British subjects holding lands in this territory are debarred from acquiring any right of occupancy - a circumstance which on the occasion of every renewed

settlement of ryotwari holdings in the occupancy of British subjects, is liable to create disturbance, if settlements are made with outsiders in supersession of the old holders. This rule, which the Durbar promised to revise, stands yet unaltered. The new minister's attention has been drawn to it. Altogether 225 persons were brought to trial, of whom, 128 or 56.8 were convicted, and 74, or 32.8 were acquitted or discharged, while 2 persons escaped during trial, and the cases of 21 remained pending at the close of the year.

75. *(5) Statement of criminal cases in which warrants were issued under the Extradition Act* - The number of persons against whom warrants remained unexecuted at the close of the previous year was 14. The number against whom warrants were issued during the year was 13. Of these 27 persons, 4 were arrested and made over to the State, 3 surrendered themselves after the issue of warrants, while the warrants against the remaining 20 could not be executed, the accused having absconded and no trace of them being found. Of the seven persons made over or surrendered, all were brought to trial, of whom four were convicted, one escaped, and two remained under trial at the close of the year.

76. *(6) Statement of cases which were certified for trial in British territory* - There were only two such cases during the year. One was tried in which a person was convicted of theft; the other was struck off for default of the complainant.

77. *(7) Statement of civil suits* - Including the suits pending from the previous year, the total number for disposal was 281, of which 244 were disposed of. One hundred and four cases only were contested; 69 of them were decreed in favour of the plaintiffs, and 35 in favour of the defendants. The entire value of the suits amounted to Rs. 14, 117-6-10, of which the sum of Rs. 6,491-15-5 only was decreed . The total amount of fees realised was Rs. 2,067-12 against Rs. 2,797-12 of the previous year.

78. *(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in civil suits.* - There were 60 cases of appeal, all of which were disposed of except 5 pending in the lower Appellate Court. In about half the number, the orders appealed against were confirmed. The Judge of the First Appellate Court is a son-in-law of the Maharajah. The Khas Appellate Court continued to be presided over by the Jubraj.

79. *(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subjects were concerned* - The total number of suits was 83 against 81 of the previous year. The number in which British subjects were plaintiffs was 61, while the number in which they were defendants was only 6, and the number in which they were both plaintiffs and defendants was 16. It is noticeable that in the civil courts British subjects appear more as plaintiffs and in the criminal courts more as the defendants.

JAILS

80. There were four jails or lock-ups in the State as before, which contain at the close of the year 75 prisoners against 87 of the previous year. The prisoners continued to receive lenient treatment on the whole. In the Agartola Jail, however, where on the average there were about 42 prisoners daily, rather a hard mode of treatment was introduced without any reasonable ground, the prisoners having been given heavy shackles to put on.

81. Escapes from jail were more frequent during the year. Two prisoners bolted from the Sonamura Jail, three from the Bilania Jail, and one from the Koylashar Jail; they were all British subjects. The situation of these jails, which lie within a few paces of British territory, not only facilitates the escape of prisoners, but

also tempts them to commit the offence. In Bilania the prisoners have to bathe in, and to take their drinking water from, British territory on the very line of the boundary of which the Bilania sub-divisional office stands. The unsuitableness of the locality has been brought to the notice of the Durbar.

82. At Agartola a strong masonry building has been erected for the use of the jail. But there is no means for supply of water within its enclosure. This want, it is hoped, will be removed ere long. The health of the prisoners was, on the whole, good, and they were dieted and looked after with care. Altogether 55 prisoners were admitted into hospital as sick, of whom 54 were cured and one remained under treatment at the close of the year.

83. Military and frontier matters - In January and February vague rumours of Lushai movements came from the east and caused some excitement amongst the people of Udoypur. Thereupon the Sub-divisional Officer of Sonamura promptly went to the tract which served to keep the public peace unbroken. From Bilania, too, rumours of the kind were heard, and I forthwith visited the place. On enquiry, the rumours were everywhere found to be groundless.

84. The three guard posts of Dharmanagar, Chirakuti, and Kamalpur in the Koylashar division, the two posts of Udoypur and Eksari in the Udoypur division, and the post of Bilania in the Bilania division were all duly garrisoned in the winter. The first-named guard has lately been removed to an advanced position about 4 miles to the south-east of the locality it hitherto occupied. The change, as reported last year, was necessary on account of extension of cultivation.

85. I visited the posts of Udoypur and Eksari in February and found them in good condition. The Eksari post, which was garrisoned by 29 men and officers, was particularly good. There was an additional force of 14 Binandias under a jemadar at the place, all of whom knew the use of firearms. Binandias are hill peons.

86. At the request of your predecessor, and with the permission of the Durbar, Mr. W.W.Daly, the Commanding Officer of the Surma Valley Frontier Battalion, inspected the posts of the Koylashar division. He did not find them in a good state. Inability on the part of the administration to distribute the pay allowances of the officers and men with regularity is the main cause of every evil. Men who are fit for active service in the fields are not eager for employment under the Raj. Of the 273 men constituting the entire force as stated in the annexed Military return, 113 are Bengal Mahomedans who chiefly belong to the cultivating classes of Agartola, possessing little or no efficiency as sepoys. The eight Bengali-Hindus and the 13 Christians shown in the return are also by profession cultivators of the soil. The remaining 139, namely, 58 Goorkhas, 11 Assamese, 45 Hindustanis and 25 Tipperahs and Manipuris are, however, mostly reliable. Under orders of Government the administration is required to have at least 70 Goorkhas in the frontier guards. The Durbar has often been reminded of it. But owing to financial and recruiting difficulties, it has not been able to enlist the full complement. Goorkhas, like the Bengalis, are not expected to serve long without regularly receiving pay.

87. The supply of arms and ammunition is obtained from British trerritory on licenses granted for the purpose by Government. The present stock having run short, application has been made by the Durbar for a licence to import a fresh supply which will be required next cold weather for the use of the guards.

THE STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS

88. There was nothing done by the administration during the year to improve the state of the communications

of the country. The road leading to Kasba is in a bad state of repair. A few small bridges or culverts are much wanted. The Durbar is alive to the necessity of repairing the road which connects the capital of the State with the town of Commilla. It is only for want of funds that the work cannot be executed. The road which joins this station with old Agartola where the Maharajah now resides was partially improved at the expense of the Bara Thakur who got a masonry bridge constructed on it at an expense of over a thousand rupees.

89. The Lahars or the pathways through the hills which connect the administrative stations with one another and all with head-quarters were, as usual, cut in the winter. Those paths have to be cut de novo almost every year in consequence of the changes that take place in the situation of hill villages through which they pass.

90. The proposal for connecting Koylashar with Dharmanagar by a road through the Unakati hills which engaged the attention of the Sub-divisional Officer of Koylashar last, year could not be carried out for want of funds. Sonamura, however, was connected with Udoypur by a footpath about 25 miles long, which had once been in existence before, but subsequently abandoned.

91. The administration has not as yet been able to make within its own jurisdiction safe and convenient passages for transport of offenders from one station to another. At present accused persons, as well as the military when required to move from one place to another, have frequently to march through British dominions.

BOUNDARY MATTERS.

92. The boundary between the State and British territory was defined and demarcated about the time of the revenue survey of the adjacent districts. The boundary marks, except where natural marks are in existence, are either masonry pillars or posts. Of the former, several are now in a delapidated condition, while some have been entirely destroyed. On the sites of three of those wholly gone, three iron pillars were erected during the year by the Public Works Department, Tipperah.

93. Owing to the boundary posts being very far from one another, and the intervening tracts being covered with jungle, disputes regarding territorial jurisdiction are of frequent occurrence, in 1884 such disputes occurring on the Noakholly side. I arranged with the approval of the Political Agent and the Maharajah to get some intermediate posts erected on the line of the boundary. The work was done by the Sub-divisional Officer of Feni, Noakholly, and the Sub-divisional Officer of Bilania, Hill Tipperah. These posts, which were wooden ones, and which were liable to be soon destroyed, have lately been replaced by iron pillars. There is now no dispute in that quarter. In order that all disputes of the kind may be set at rest, it is necessary that intermediate posts at suitable distances should be placed along the whole line of the boundary.

94. A case of dispute regarding the jurisdiction over certain Tipperah punjis on the Sylhet side is now pending for a long time, for the settlement of which a professional survey of the boundary will be made next cold weather. A small tract of His Highness' dominion, about 200 acres in area, at the mouth of the Kurti Cherra, near the Thal post, was proposed by the administration of Assam to be included in British territory in order that the advantages of a long-continued line of natural boundary might be secured. The Maharajah, however, thought otherwise, and expressed his inability to give consent to the proposal.

95. The question of the two small villages partly belonging to British territory and partly held in the possession of the State, as mentioned in the last report, was settled during the year. The boundary, as defined

by the arbitrators and laid down on the ground, was decided to be maintained, and respected, the administration having given up possession of such portions of the villages as according to the existing boundary marks were not within this State.

EDUCATION

96. The number of schools and patshalas was the same as before, namely, 18: 16 for boys and 2 for girls. The number of students, however, declined from 470 to 409, owing, it is believed, to their prospects in the institutions being very limited. In matters educational, very indifferent attention is paid by the administration. The teachers are allowed to remain unpaid for many months together; the consequence is that they perform their duties only half-heartedly. For inspectional work there is now no arrangement, properly speaking.

97. The highest standards taught in the English and vernacular schools of the State correspond respectively to those fixed for the minor and vernacular scholarship examinations under the government rules. But the scholarship allowed by the administration not being tenable outside the State, the schools are not attractive. This point has been brought to the notice of the Durbar, with the suggestion that, either the scholarships granted by the State be made tenable in Government schools, or some arrangements be effected under which students of His Highness' schools may be allowed to undergo for a pass certificate only the minor and vernacular scholarship examinations, as the case may be, held under rules of the Government Educational Department.

98. The children of the Maharajah's family continued to be taught privately by a teacher specially employed for the purpose. The Jubraj and the Bara Thakur are no more under charge of a tutor. They have no educated and experienced companion either. For the formation of their character, and for their general training, it is desirable that they should be allowed a wise and well-informed attendant.

DISPENSARIES

99. There were four dispensaries in the State, in which 4,728 persons received medicines as out-door patients, against 4,009 of the previous year. Among them, 4,357, or 92.2 percent., were cured, 279, or 5.9 percent, discontinued attendance, 34 or .7 percent., died, and 58, or 1.2 percent., remained under treatment at the close of the year. The surgical and vaccine operations performed were, respectively, 108 and 3,744.

100. Regular arrangement for in-door treatment does not exist - a want which has been brought to the notice of the Durbar. In cases of urgent necessity, however, the doctor in charge of the dispensary is authorised to admit persons as in-door patients. The prevailing diseases during the year were fever, bowel-complaints, sores, and skin diseases.

POST OFFICE

101. As reported in previous years, there is no regular postal system under the management of the State; nor are the people of the hills in need of anything of the kind, as communication by letters is seldom carried on amongst them. The administration has special messengers of its own who are used as dak-runners when necessary.

102. Most of the needful communication of the country is carried on through Government post offices. The post office attached to the Agency continued to get on satisfactorily. It works at a considerable profit, the price

of postage stamps sold per month being itself over three times the monthly cost, which amounts to Rs. 39 only; while the fees obtained under the heads of registration, insurance, and money-orders and the postage realised on unpaid covers bring in a handsome additional income. The value of money-orders issued during the year was Rs. 53,534, and that of insured covers Rs. 10,553, the former showing a decrease of Rs. 11,498 and the latter an increase of Rs. 5,158 compared with the figures of the previous year. The falling off in money-orders is due to the fact that in the previous year on account of some marriage in the Rajbari, the remittance made by it was exceptionally large. The increase in the value of insured covers indicates increase of trade in Agartola.

MISCELLANEOUS

103. The claims by and against Mr. Larminie, mentioned in the last annual report, were amicably settled during the year. A portion of the amount awarded to him remains, however, yet unpaid, pending adjustment by him of a claim of Messrs. T.E. Thomson & Co. of Calcutta.

104. A collection of the raw economic products of the country was made during, the year for the Indo-Colonial Exhibition of London, and forwarded to your office, together with a collection of the principal manufactures of the hill people. The Maharajah's officers lent every help and co-operation in the matter.

105. The Municipality of Agartola was not in a flourishing condition. The Bara Thakur continued to be at its head, but owing to want of means was unable to do much public good. He means, however, well. Among other things he has it in his contemplation to put a bridge over the river Haora, by which the road between this station and old Agartola is intersected. This is a most crying want of the public as well as of the officers, pleaders, and tradesmen who have daily to carry on business in both the towns.

106. The head clerk of this office, Baboo Gobind Chandra Das, well maintained his character for efficiency by discharging his duties throughout year with care, intelligence, and regularity.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR 1886-87

No. 1836 -- XVI-9, dated Comillah, the 15th July 1887
From - J. C. PRICE, ESQ., Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-office Political Agent of Hill Tipperah,
To - The Commissioner of the Chittagnong Division.

I HAVE the honour to submit, in original, the "Annual Report on the General Administration of the Political Agency of Hill Tipperah for the year 1886-1887," complied by the Assistant Political Agent, Baboo Umakanta Das. This officer has now been in charge of the Agency for several years; his experience of Hill Tipperah is so wide that he has been able to submit a full and ample report, to which I can add nothing new. Besides, a perusal of former reports and resolutions will show that almost every subject connected with Hill Tipperah administration has been more than once fully discussed and threshed threadbare. It is not necessary for me, therefore, to go over old ground, and I will make any remarks I may have to offer as brief as possible. The views that I had formed from personal observations on several subjects connected with Hill Tipperah during a visit I made to Agartala in April last have already been submitted to you with my letter No. 1193-XVI-46 of 12th May 1887. I do not know that anything has come to light since which would induce me to modify or alter those views in any important particular.

2. As I understand them, the functions of the Assistant Political Agent are two-fold. In the first place, he has to safeguard the interests of British subjects when business or other motives induce them to visit Hill Tipperah. In the next place, he is to watch the internal administration of the State, give advice where necessary, and report to his own Government such matters as he considers grave and important enough to justify or require the interference of the paramount power; and therefore his report is necessarily diffuse, and very properly brings under review all branches of the administration of Hill Tipperah. His report might very properly be called "the Annual Report on the General Administration of Hill Tipperah," instead of that the "Political Agency." I make these preliminary remarks because I have heard it contended by people connected with the Raj that the Assistant Political Agent's report should be limited to discussion on the conditions of the frontier outposts; on the measures taken to maintain in tact the boundary separating Hill Tipperah from British territory; on the administration of justice in respect of British subjects, and so forth. This is not a correct view of the requirements of the case; the Assistant Political Agent has very properly taken a wider range, and his report is most interesting, and I have little doubt will be read by you with the same satisfaction as reports of former years.

3. *Administrative changes* -- The most important of them were the resignation of the former and the appointment of the present Minister. In a State like Hill Tipperah almost everything for good or evil depends upon the personal character of the Chief and his Minister. There have been three Ministers during the last four years : Dhananjoy Thakur, a relation of the Maharajah and son of a Prime Minister, but who was reduced to a nonentity by a council that opposed him at every step, and which was apparently created for the special purpose it so completely effected. Next came Baboo Dinanath Sen from the Government Education Department, whose previous training it was scarcely to be expected would enable him to develop into an able administrator of a State, and who after two or three months' trial at Agartala very wisely resigned, on what I cannot help considering was a mere pretext. He might have succeeded, but he did not give himself the chance; perhaps in the face of the difficulties surrounding him he despaired of success. It is noticeable that a great deal of reform and many improvements have been attributed to Baboo Dinanath Sen. In consideration of the few weeks - about twelve that he spent in Agartala, it is at least improbable, if not impossible, that he could have done as much as is claimed for him. The two chief Banker Ghats on the Geruti and the Houra, I understand,

were actually arranged for by Dhanajoy Thakur in March 1885, a full year before the Baboo's appointment. The "ijara pattas" were written out perhaps during the Baboo's incumbency. As a matter of fact, I understand that the systematic conduct of business which is now discernible in all departments has been entirely the work of the present Minister. Lastly, Baboo Mohini Mohan Bardhan, B. A. B. L., Government Pleader of Tippreah, who during his twenty years' practice at Commillah has acquired an accurate and intimate knowledge of State affairs (in the more important of which he was sent for to Agartala, and consulted by the Maharajah) was appointed Minister. If the Baboo is able to retain the confidence and respect of the Maharajah, which seems very probable, no doubt he will be able to effect much good in a reasonable time. However, the Maharajah should dismiss his former favourites and bad advisers, who, though no longer formally constituting the council referred to above, doubtless still exercise a most simister influence on the affairs of the State. The most pernicious of these persons is the Secretary, so frequently and unfavorably noticed in the various reports and resolutions of former years. His retention in opposition to the unanimous advice, both official and private, of all who are qualified to express a reliable opinion on the subject, is ominous and much to be deplored by all those who wish well to the State. I am bound to say that the absence of a list of items of expenditure such as the Government in a recent communication hoped the Maharajah would supply, does not look as if the proper equilibrium between income and expenditure, to secure which was one of the principal reasons for the appointment of the present Minister, will ever be accomplished. Can it be that the Maharajah is so much the slave of his favourites that he turns a deaf ear to all the reasonable remonstrances of his new Minister ?

* Government letter No. 1652P, dated the 11th May 1887.

The next most important and beneficial change is the placing of the English or Political Department under the Minister's direct supervision at Agartala in the hands of Baboo Banga Chandra Bhattacherja, B. A., an officer of great intelligence and future promise.

The other changes involving the employment of Thakurs are all in the right direction. It is a pity that the Thakurs all cannot be more freely employed as State officials. Not only would their salaries be smaller than those of outsiders, but the welfare of the State, being identical with their own, would be better looked after. However, a number of young Thakurs are being educated in Comillah, Calcutta and Agartala, and they will doubtless hereafter be employed in State appointments. I understand that the better and more systematic education and training of these young Thakurs is engaging special attention at Agartala.

4. The Assistant Political Agent has shown that the net increase in revenue under all heads amounts to Rs. 46,046. I hope this will not be taken as an inducement to launch out into additional and useless expenditure. Rather it should act as a stimulant in the direction of economy; but unfortunately there is a great want of ready money which is absolutely necessary to pay off and dismiss useless servants; and British subjects who are creditors of the State in large amounts are numerous. Without pressure from the British Government brought to bear on the Maharajah, I fear nothing will be done for them. The system of "barats," by which the surplus of the zemindary collections is assigned to the favourites of the Maharajah or to other persons, is most pernicious. It is unaccountable where all the money goes.

5. My remarks on other heads will be very brief. In respect of the extension of cultivation, I am inclined to think that there is not so much waste culturable land in Hill Tipperah as is generally supposed. The hills are fit only for "jooming." The waste land that could be cultivated by ordinary means lies along the banks of rivers, and I doubt whether a large portion of this land is not morass and bog utterly unsuited for cultivation.

In past years fear of Lushai raids prevented extension of cultivation. This has all been changed now, but still I doubt that cultivation in Hill Tipperah can be made as remunerative as forest produce.

6. In the matter of roads and communications, Hill Tipperah would appear to be very badly off. The so called impenetrable jungle on the banks of the rivers might be cleared away to facilitate traffic, but the expense would be enormous. Forest produce in sufficient quantities can be procured close to the border.

7. It is noteworthy that there were three cases certified for trial in British Tipperah under the extradition law, but, strange to say, the complainants did not appear to press the charge in any one of the three cases.

8. The professional surveyor appointed by Government has decided all disputed points, in relation to the boundary, against the Maharajah. It is said that the oldest officials are very ignorant in respect of boundary matters. To please the Maharajah, and make him believe that they are very zealous, they get up those disputes. Could not the boundary between Hill Tipperah and British territory be demarcated in the same way as the boundary between British India and Nepal is ? A line of trees or bamboo clumps, a ditch with the excavated earth thrown on the British side, a neutral zone on either side of the ditch, and stone or masonry pillars at convenient sites, render disputes in the Nepal frontier almost impossible.

No. 407, dated Agartala, the 7th July 1887.

From - Baboo UMA KANTA DAS, Assistant Political Agent, Hill Tipperah.

To - The Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah.

I HAVE the honour to submit the annual report on the general administration of the Political Agency of Hill Tipperah for the year 1886-87.

2. Among the notable events of the year were the resignation of one Minister and the appointment of another. Baboo Dina Nath Sen, Assistant Inspecter of Schools, Dacca, whose employment as Minister was reported last year, continued in service under the Raj for about six months, and then left it, as he was not permitted to draw travelling allowance in addition to his pay of Rs. 800 a month. The people hoped from him much; and within a short time of his appointment he was able to show by his action and conduct that he was effecting a palpable change for the better in the condition of the general administration of the State. He organised proper systems of management, and placed the same in actual working order. His resignation therefore was a matter for general regret.

3. As soon as the Baboo formally expressed his intention for reverting to his former post, I pointed out to His Highness, at an interview, the necessity for another person being selected to be his successor. The Maharajah considered the point with care and attention, and in due course appointed Baboo Mohini Mohan Bardhan, Government Pleader, Tipperah, to be his Minister on a salary of Rs. 1,000 per mensem. The appointment was made in November last. Baboo Mohini Mohan comes from the district of Tipperah. He is known to His Highness from a long time, and is possessed of considerable experience of the affairs of the State which will help him in the discharge of his duties. By his karnama, i. e., the letter of administration, he is authorised to hold every officer under the Raj answerable to him for his action, but is himself exempted from

the liability to render accounts to any -- a circumstance which, though itself of questionable expediency, shows that he has the full confidence of his master.

4. For some years past this office has had to continuously advise His Highness to appoint a trustworthy administrator, and to let him have the power, and therefore the responsibility, of duly carrying on the business of the State which hitherto used generally to remain at a standstill. The Maharajah has now accepted the advice in full and has taken action accordingly. In doing so he has done a duty to his State, and he deserves credit for it. It will now be the business of the Minister to try to remove the present embarrassed condition of the Raj, to improve its general administration, and to ensure peace and prosperity to the people. Much will depend upon his intelligence and energy, but more upon his integrity and firmness.

5. Among the new Ministers' first acts were the change of the weekly official holiday from Sunday to Wednesday, and the transfer of the offices, including the Maharajah's English office which corresponds with the Agency, from New Agartala, where the Agency is situated, to Old Agartala, where the Maharajah resides -- a distance of about four miles. The first action, which is due to the desire of observing as a holiday the day of the week on which His Highness was born, viz., Wednesday, has been hailed with gratification by all classes of the employees under the Raj. It is however of no consequence so far as the work of the administration is concerned. The expediency of the second is yet to be seen, though the Minister has assured me that the object of the transfer of the English office was to ensure speed and regularity in the despatch of business connected with the Agency, most of which required the personal attention both of His Highness and of himself. The Minister was able to effect certain reductions in regard to some of the establishment at head-quarters, but, on the other hand, he had to sanction increments in respect of others. About the close of the year he got three small Acts passed by His Highness relating to the police, the excise, and the landlords and tenants. It is too soon yet to say what success will attend his administration; but clever as he is, he will, it is believed, be able to hold his own : and if he can do so, he will not find it difficult to introduce many reforms, as his field of work is both extensive and virgin.

6. Soon after his appointment the late Minister engaged himself in the work of improving the finances of the State, and for that purpose, as reported last year, took up for revision the settlement of the Banker Ghats first. The task was as difficult as it was necessary, but Baboo Dina Nath Sen performed it with success, securing in the course of a short time increase of revenue to the extent of nearly Rs. 40,000. The work of revision and re-settlement has been wisely followed by his successor, and though in every case the increase of revenue obtained has not been as much as was reasonably expected, the great capacity of the Banker Ghats, which hitherto was a secret to all but farmers, is now thoroughly known to everybody belonging to the Raj; and the light now obtained will be of material help to the officers of the administration when the mehals are brought under khas management or are let out again.

7. Another notable occurrence of the year was the general apprehension of disturbance felt in the Koylashar Division about the beginning of the last cold weather. It was caused by the rivalry between two step-brothers-both Kuki Chiefs -- in connection with the marriage of a girl named Laluguri, the daughter of another Chief of the tribe, now deceased. The disturbance that was threatened was happily averted by the tact and good sense of Dewan Baboo Durga Prasad Gupta, who quietly effected a good understanding between the two rival brothers. I visited Koylashar immediately after the occurrence, and in my diary noted the following on the subject :--

"The Dewan possesses considerable influence over the Kukis. He invited the two rival Chiefs, the girl, and all the principal Kuki Sirdars to come to Koylashar; and in the meeting which took place in accordance to this invitation, he asked Laluguri to name the person she wished to have as her husband. Laluguri did not at first name anybody, but said that she would not object to accept any one who might be selected for her by the Dewan, whom she had always looked upon as her father. The Dewan then requested some of the elderly Kuki women who had attended the meeting to sound Laluguri's mind, informing them at the same time that he would be able to let her have whomsoever she preferred. Laluguri then communicated privately that her choice fell upon the younger of the two rivals, namely, Baukhampui. On this the Dewan took the elder rival, namely, Rang Liana, aside, and told him that it was very improper on his part to seek the hands of a girl whom his younger brother wished to marry, and that he would greatly raise himself in the estimation of the people if he would declare before them that, in consideration of this fact, he had given up his desire to have the girl. He further told him that if he would agree to do this, he (the Dewan) would make his rival appear before him and ask pardon for his past conduct towards him in respect of the matter. He agreed. Baukhampui was then taken aside and was told that he would be able to have Laluguri only if before the public he would come to Rang Liana, his elder brother, and ask to be pardoned on account of his conduct which he (the Dewan) considered to be very improper, because he should not for a moment have thought of taking the hands of a girl who was liked and wanted by his elder brother. He added that to ask pardon of an elder brother was not only not humiliating but that it was positively ennobling one's self in the estimation of all who were sensible. Baukhampui at first demurred, but was afterwards prevailed upon to act accordingly. Both the brothers then met before the public, who had assembled at Koylashar on the occasion, and each acted in accordance to the advice given by the Dewan. The dispute being thus settled, Baukhampui married Laluguri."

8. A levee, perhaps the first of its kind, was held during the year on the day of His Highness' birth, when congratulatory addresses were read and honours were distributed. A similar Durbar, but on a considerably larger scale, was held on the 16th February last in commemoration of Her majesty the Queen-Empress' Jubilee. On this occasion, among other things an imperial salute was fired, and some prisoners were liberated from the Agartala Jail.

9. During the year an important civil suit, valued at over 34 lakhs of rupees, was instituted by the Government against the Maharajah in connection with the Balishira hills of Sylhet. Except a small fraction of these hills, of which the Maharajah is settlement holder, Government claims the remainder as its own property. The entire area covered by the hills is said to be about 150,000 acres, all admirably fit for tea cultivation. The suit is yet pending, and if not settled amicably, for which purpose endeavours are being made on behalf of the Maharajah, it will continue for a long time and will prove very highly expensive.

TOUR

10. For three months of the year I was absent on privilege leave. During the remaining nine months I spent 95 days in camp, visiting the sub-divisional offices, police thanas and outposts, cotton offices, frontier guards, and also outstills, bazars and several hill-villages, as well as schools, dispensaries and other public institutions. In my rounds I inspected a good number of the marks which denote the common line of boundary of Hill Tipperah and British territory, and also those portions of the line which the Mahrajah's office considered disputable.

11. Early in December I went out with your predecessor to Bisalgar, and stayed there for a week. Mr. Jones

passed on through the hills to Udoypur, and from there to Commillah. At Bisalgar I observed the working of the local police thana and that of the cotton office and the bazar. Returning from there, I went to Bamutia and saw the police and the cotton offices and the bazar of the place. Bamutia and Bisalgar are two extensive and important pergunnahs in which cultivation has been largely extended by Manipuris, a class of people who are well up in the arduous work of reclaiming waste lands. While in Bamutia I saw, in company with the Maharajah's local officer, a disputed portion of the boundary line. Here two of the boundary marks were considered by the Maharajah's office to be incorrectly situated. It was found that under this consideration the Administration was allowing its local officers to exercise jurisdiction beyond the line as indicated by the marks. The matter was duly brought to the notice of the Durbar, by which orders have been issued for the marks being properly respected until the matter is settled after such enquiry as may be necessary.

12. I next proceeded to Mohanpur, twenty miles north of Agartala, which also is the seat of a police thana and a cotton office. In addition to these, there is a forest toll office recently established at the place by the farmer of the local Bankar Ghat for the collection of dues on hill products floated down the Sonai river on which the office stands. British sub-jects of the adjacent pergunnahs of Sylhet and Tipperah were found to be determined not to pay to anybody any tax on account of such forest produce as they used to cut and carry away on their shoulder. In consequence of their recusancy, the zemindars of those portions of the hills which lay in British territory were obliged to seek help from the district authorities in the matter of the realisation of their dues.

13. About the middle of January I left for the northern parts of the State which are included in the Koylashar Division, and came back on the 16th of February to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen-Empress' Jubilee. In Koylashar I saw all the offices and other public institutions of the place, and also several villages occupied by the Kukis, who at one time were disturbed by false reports regarding Lushai movements. In company with the Sub-divisional Officer of Habigang, Sylhet, and the Sub-divisional Officer of Koylashar, both of whom had come out in camp, I saw in my way Mr. Assistant Surveyor, Doran, who was employed by the Assam Government to re-survey and to re-lay such portions of the boundary between the State and Sylhet as were disputed by the Maharajah's office. I visited also some of the disputed Tipperah Punjis in connection with which the enquiry started by Mr. Doran was found necessary.

14. Early in March I started for the southern and the central parts of the State, viz., those that are comprised within the Sonamura and the Bilania Divisions, and returned in April after an absence of one month. On my way back I passed through the Maharajah's zemindaries in the districts of Noakhali and Tipperah. In his dealings with the subjects of his estates, the Maharajah, on policy, avoids resorting to criminal courts. In the civil courts he appears more as a plaintiff than as a defendant. The policy is a good one.

15. During the cold weather all the three Sub-divisional Officers of Koylashar, Sonamura and Bilania made long tours of inspection in their jurisdiction. They are now sufficiently acquainted with the resources and requirements of their respective divisions. In January last the minister went to Comillah and, availing himself of the opportunity, visited the sub-divisional station of Sonamura, and inspected the several local offices.

STATISTICAL ENQUIRY

16. No such enquiry is known to have ever been made by the Administration, and none can be expected to be made as long as the present financial difficulties are not over. On account of these difficulties no project, howsoever necessary or desirable, can be undertaken; when they are lessened, the Administration, it is hoped,

will make careful investigation regarding the actual state and the resources of the country. At present it is known -- vide the Administration Report of the Government of Bengal for the year 1884-85 -- that the total area of the Maharajah's hill territory is about 4,086 square miles, which is nearly equal to the extent of the districts of Tipperah (2,491 square miles) and Noakhali (1,641 square miles) put together. About three-fifths of the area, or over 2,400 square miles, are, it is believed, covered with hills and marshes which are unfit for plough cultivation. Of the remaining two-fifths, or an extent of over 1,600 square miles, about one-sixteenth only, or some 100 square miles, are supposed to be under actual cultivation. These are chiefly let out in taluks and farms which yield a revenue of about Rs. 40,000 a year. The remaining 1,500 square miles, which are all believed to be cultivable, are lying waste. The rate of rent paid by cultivating ryots varies from annas two to one rupee and annas eight per kani, which is about one-third of an acre.

17. The whole country is an extensive open forest with patches of cultivation here and there. The forests contain an inexhaustible supply of timber, bamboos, canes and other useful articles which are cut and removed according to the requirements of the people and also exported in large quantities both by land and water, the export duty bringing in a gross annual revenue of about a lakh of rupees. Sal, jarul and other kinds of valuable timber, however, are prohibited from being so cut and removed; but no sufficient arrangement for their protection exists, and so they are not unfrequently felled and taken away by the British borderers. The Maharajah's office has been advised to establish a proper system of conservancy, but no action is known to have yet been taken in this directions except the sanction recently given to the appointment of a few additional guards. One who has some knowledge of forestry is required to be placed in charge of the sal wood tracts which ought to be properly reserved. The late Political Agent, Mr. F. H. B. Skrine, was of opinion that the Durbar should apply for and obtain the loan of the services of an intelligent and experienced officer of the Government Forest Department.

18. According to the census of 1881 the entire number of population of the country is 95,637, which gives 23.4 souls to a square mile on the average. From these is raised a revenue of Rs. 1,69,400 a year. This is the total income of the State minus the export duties on forest produce, the royalty on elephants caught and sold, and the tax for grazing buffaloes in the hills, -- all of which are mostly paid by British subjects. If five is taken as the number of members of a family on the average, there are altogether about 19,127 families both on the hills and in the plains of the State. From each of these families, therefore, an average annual income of Rs. 8-5 is obtained by the Administration -- a rate which, though somewhat high in consideration of the little convenience and comforts afforded them by the State in return, is not incommensurate to the costly nature of protection it has to provide for them against Lushai inroads.

19. But there is a remarkable diversity in the rates of the family tax payable by the different tribes of the hill people. Almost every tribe has a rate of its own. Thus of the class of Tipperah Proper, the Puran Tipperahs and the Jamatyas pay the tax at the rate of Rs. 3-8 a year, while the Noatyas pay it at the considerably high rate of Rs. 8, which is also the rate of the Reangs. The Hallams pay at a lower rate than the Tipperahs, and the Kukis do not pay the tax at all.

20. The above mentioned tribes live on low hills in the interior and carry on their cultivation under the jooming system. Their number on the whole is about 50,000. The remaning part of the population of the State lives in the plains and carries on cultivation by means of plough. It consists of the Manipuris -- mostly Hindus and partly Mahomedans, -- and Bengalis -- who are mostly Mahomedans and partly Hindus of the lower

castes. The great middle classes, who in every country form the most important part of its population, are entirely unknown in the Maharajah's dominions. Some of the Jamatyas near Udoypur have commenced to dwell in houses similar to those of Bengalis, leaving their national manchas. They have also begun to take to the plough cultivation, forsaking the jooming system. They are thus becoming more settled in their habitation than the other hill people.

21. Among the noteworthy places in the State, the most interesting is Udoypur, the former capital of the country, close to which are lying the ruins of several ancient monuments and forts. Not far from the place is the old shrine of Tripura Sundari, the site of which is regarded as a holy place of pilgrimage by all classes of Hindus. The Maharajah maintains an establishment at the shrine for making daily offerings there, which costs him about Rs. 150 a month. To the north-east of Udoypur, about 20 miles from it, lies the Deotamura range of hills which contains big images of Hindu gods and goddesses, carved on one of its sides at the place where it is intersected by the river Gumti. From these images the range takes its name -- Deotamura. Another interesting place, containing a very large number of such images, is the Unakuti hill, about six miles to the east of the Koylashar sub-divisional station. Here the images are most artistic in structure and also generally bigger in size. Like those of Deotamura, many of the images of this place also are carved on the body of the hill, but more are separate by themselves. There is no inscription anywhere about the place; but it is believed that the figures are several centuries old. The cut of the faces of these images is strikingly Mongolian. Besides these places of interest, there are others, all over the country, where old and big tanks now mostly overgrown with jungle, ruins of brick built walls and buildings, portions of broad and straight roads, bear unmistakable testimony of the state of civilisation and the high degree of prosperity to which the country had once attained.

WEATHER AND CROPS

22. During the year rainfall was unusually abundant. The total quantity registered, viz., 87-56 inches, was an increase of 11.02 inches on the fall of the previous year, and of 9.52 inches on the average of the preceding three years, as the following table will show :-

Months	Average fall of 1882-83, 1883-84 and 1884-85.	Total fall in 18885-86.	Total fall in 1886-87.
April	5.90	5.57	5.97
May	13.00	6.73	12.38
June	15.95	24.05	8.21
July	12.66	7.97	16.89
August	9.76	9.50	21.90
September	8.83	14.02	10.66
October	5.67	4.35	2.35
November	1.36	.35	....
December	1.66	....	....
January	....	....	1.63
February	1.34	....	....
March	1.91	4.00	7.57
Total	78.04	76.54	87.56

23. In July and August the downpour was so heavy that the plough lands of the country were occasionally overfloded. The floods, however, were temporary, and so they caused no appreciable degree of harm to the standing crops. while by increasing the sub-soil moisture they added to the fertility of the ground. Public health was good throughout the year, both in the hills and in the plains of the State.

24. Joom crops, which are grown on elevated grounds on the hills, are always safe from floods. During the year paddy and til (oil-seeds) were produced abundantly; but the cotton crop was not a good one, having been damaged by rats, large troops of which invaded the jooms in several parts of the State, specially towards the north, and committed great mischief. Of the agricultural produce of the country, cotton is most important in a commercial point of view; but the people evidently do not grow it as plentifully as before, as they do not find the industry profitable to them. During the year 120 Ib. of Nankin cotton seeds were obtained from Buxar and distributed through the Maharajah's office among the hill people for sowing in their jooms. Instructions were obtained and communicated to the Administration as to the mode of sowing. The result of the cultivation as reported by the Maharajah's office is not encouraging. The experiment may be tried again. Khaki-coloured cotton of good quality is known to grow spontaneously in the territory.

25. In the plains paddy, sugarcane, chillies, tobacco and mustard were produced in abundance. In the low lands Aus paddy is grown in addition to Amun. The latter, however, is the staple produce of the plains, and is generally grown in large quantities to admit of a considerable portion of it being sold to tradesmen for exportation from the country.

26. The general condition of the people is far from being desirable, but no change in it is yet sought by them. Being extremely conservative, the people are averse to have any innovation introduced amongst them, howsoever beneficial it may be. On the other hand, being exceedingly lazy, they do not care to work for the improvement of of their position. Primitive in their mode of living, they know but few wants, and these few they can get supplied with only little exertion. They are happy, innocent and simple -- traits which are due to their general ignorance. These remarks are applicable to the people who live far in the interior of the hills, and who form the most interesting portion of the population of the country.

27. Those of the hill people who live close to the plains, as well as the Manipuris and the Bengali inhabitants of the country, are faring pretty well. Like those alluded to above, they also are all agriculturists, having plenty of lands to cultivate, and generally growing paddy in large quantities. They know no want of the actual necessaries of life, and have no aspiration of any kind. They are peaceful and submissive to the ruling authority, which they both love and respect.

28. Though peaceful and contented, the people in general are far from being prosperous. Prosperity of a nation depends in a great measure upon the state of its general education and upon the facility it has for carrying on communication with people of superior orders. As regards the former, the Administration has not yet been able to do what is required; while in respect of the latter, it seems that the country has hitherto been maintained as *a terra incognita* Under the rule regarding permits, every person who is not a subject of the State, but who wishes to visit any of the hill villages in search of employment, is required to take a pass on payment of a fee. Thus a smith, a carpenter, or any other skilled labourer has to pay for and obtain a pass before entering into the hills, as well as a sportsman, a musician, or a juggler has to do.

29. In the Government Resolutio .on the last annual report of the Agency, question was raised re

the security of person and property which the State afforded to its people. Of all things such security has undoubtedly the strongest and the most direct bearing upon the general prosperity of the subjects. I am able to report that in this respect the Administration is gradually showing signs of improvement. The Government of the country, which is personal, has, of course, many drawbacks, in consequence of which none but the most needy amongst the lowest classes of people can be induced to immigrate into this country. It is believed, however, that if the improvement which is observed to be slowly taking place in the general administration is not retarded, the aspect of affairs in this respect will in course of time change for the better.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION AND OTHER MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE.

30. During the year most of the Mugs whose immigration into this State was reported in 1882-83, and who had chiefly settled themselves in Langthung Pathar in the Bilania Division left this territory and went back, perhaps, to their old place in the Chittagong hill Tracts. They did not like to pay, in addition to the export duty on cotton and til, family tax at the rate of Rs. 8 a year at which they were assessed; they were, however, paying both the duty and the tax, though with reluctance, and would probably have stayed in the country if they were not exasperated by the action of the local officers of the State, who at one time caused a number of sepoys to be deputed to realise the family tax at the objected rate and misbehaved in other ways.

31. Several families of Reangs, who used to live on the northern side of the Feni, left the country and going across the river, settled themselves in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, of which they were once residents. They also were induced to take this step in consequence of the high rates of the family tax and the cotton and the til duty. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts no duty is levied on either of these articles. The rate of the family tax also is moderate, being about half of what is prevalent in the Hill Tipperah side of the Feni, which, in consequence of these circumstances, is mostly uninhabited. People of one side of the river are in the habit of going over to the other side to evade payment of Government dues. This practice should be prevented. In accordance to the instructions of the Commissioner, the Durbar has been requested to offer suggestions as to the course to be followed for securing the object. It seems that the end would be casily obtained if the arrears due on one side were made recoverable on the other on a certificate of the District officer or of the chief executive of the State, as the case may be, countersigned by the Political Agent, the realisation being made in accordance to the general rules of the place for the recovery of public dues.

32. As regards immigration, there has been some in the Sonamura and in the Koylashar divisions of the State. In the former several Chakmas have come from the Chitagong Hills tracts, and in the latter several Manipuris and Bengalis of the lower classes from the district of Sylhet. As reported last year, the Sub-divisional Officer of Koylashar is making laudable attempts for getting cultivation extended in the Dharmanagar valley and in the Khaiauri Hakar. He is granting for the purpose permanent leases to actual cultivators on progressive jama, with a right to hold free for the first few years, the exact period in each case being fixed in accordance to its circumstances. The fact that there has been no Lushai raid in the country for a number of years past is highly favourable for the project being carried out with success. Dharmanagar was once a flourishing and populous pergunnah of the State, yielding, it is stated, about Rs. 60,000 a year. It is now almost entirely waste, being the result, it is understood, of repeated Lushai inroads. The work of reclamation commenced over ten years ago, and during the time an annual rental of over Rs. 2,000 has been secured.

33. The loss of crops by floods which the people of Narnagar and other places of the district of Tipperah sustained during the last two years, induce some of the lower classes of the sufferers to come across the border

and to take settlements in Hill Tipperah. A few of them, however, returned to their old places owing to the climate of the hills not agreeing with them.

34. The influx of Bengalis into the country, caused under the circumstances mentioned above, was not great. To induce people to come up in large numbers, the Administration ought to be able to grant tuccavi allowances where necessary. It ought also to be able to open dispensaries and establish communications with the plains, and above all, it ought to place the courts of justice on an efficient and constitutional footing, in order that the same may command full respect and confidence of the people of the adjacent districts. At present the new comers do not at once entirely leave their residence in British territory; they keep their families and friends there, and make in Hill Tipperah only Khamarbaris or farm-houses, in which they live for the purpose of carrying on their cultivation.

35. The objectionable rule alluded to in previous reports, under which British subjects could not acquire occupancy rights in Hill Tipperah, has been done away with. It is a step in the right direction; and it will materially help extension of cultivation by inducing British subjects, particularly the borderers, to endeavour to hold lands in the State for agricultural purposes.

PRICES OF FOOD-GRAINS AND LABOUR

36. Skilled labour is hardly procurable in the State. All carpenters, smiths, as well as masons, tailors and other artizans come from the adjacent British territory. Agricultural labour also has to be imported when required. The inhabitants of the country do hardly ever feel the necessity to work for wages. The following comparative table shows the different prices of foodgrains and labour which were prevalent in the country during the last two years, and also the average prices of the previous three years :-

FOOD GRAINS.	Average price of 1882-83, 1883-84 and 1884-85			Price in 1885-86			Price in 1886-87		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice (best sort)	2	9	0	3	6	0	3	6	0
Do (common)	1	13	0	2	6	0	2	8	0
Wheat	3	10	0	3	4	0	3	5	0
Gram	2	13	0	2	10	0	3	5	0
Salt	3	10	0	3	10	0	3	10	0
Labour									
Skilled :-									
Mason	13	8	0	14	0	0	15	0	0
Smith	13	8	0	14	0	0	15	0	0
Carpenter	13	8	0	14	0	0	15	0	0
Unskilled :-									
Agriculturist	7	8	0	7	8	0	8	0	0
Day labourers	6	0	0	6	0	0	6	0	0

37. From the above it will be seen that during the year under report there was no noticeable fluctuation in prices of any of the principal food-grains. Compared, however, with the average rate of the preceding three

years, there was considerable increase in the price of rice and gram. This was owing to partial failure of the crops in the adjacent British territory during the last two years, which caused a rise in the export of the one and a falling off in the import of the other. The increase in the rate of wages of skilled labourers is due to the fact that such labourers have in some places taken to plough cultivation in addition to their ordinary work. Their services, therefore, have become dearer than before.

MINES AND MANUFACTURE

38. As reported in previous years, coal mines have been discovered in the State; but for want of capital, as wel as for want of means for transport, the mines are not worked. Some of the coal procurable in the State has been duly examined and found good. The mines are in the Koylashar and in the Sonamura Division of the country. Their extent and capacity are, however, not ascertained, not is it known what other mines there are in the State besides. A proper enquiry in this direction is worth being made, as it is generally believed that the country is not poor in respect of mines.

39. The State is not renowned for its manufactures. The Bengalis make no articles of any kind except a sort of uncleaned molasses, a considerable portion of which is exported. The Manipuris as well as the hill tribes manufacture different kinds of curious cotton pieces for their own use. Some of these, such as the pachras or bed-sheets and the Poeris or rugs, are, as mentioned in previous reports, occasionally sold in the markets. In the manufacture of these fabrics, women only are employed and not men. Such of the hill-folks as live close to the plains do sometimes manufacture bamboo mats and baskets for sale in the neighboring bazars; but unless pressed by necessity they hardly take to this work, which is chiefly done by the male portion of the community.

40. In the Sonamura Division many of the people of the Reang and Chakma classes, who live high up on the Gumti, are, during the fair weather, employed in making dug-outs. This work is carried on in the country watered by the Saima and the Raima at the foot of the Surdeng hills. The dug-outs are sold to the Bengali tradesmen, by whom they are exported to the districts of Tipperah and Noakhali, where they are largely in use for the carriage of inland trade. There are many kinds of valuable timber in the forests of the State. There is also an abundance of tusks procurable in the country. These articles might give profitable employment to many, if they were duly trained to work in them. At present all tusks found in the forests are required to be made over to the Maharajah's officers, for they are treated as the property of the State.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

41. The entire trade of the country is conducted by Bengalis, who export different kinds of forest produce as well as elephants, cotton, til and dug-outs, and import various sorts of food-grains except rice, and also salt, dried fish, hardware, piece-goods and fancy things, &c. Properly speaking, there is no centre of trade anywhere in the country, articles brought to any place being generally disposed of there for local consumption. The chief places of traffic are all close to British territory. They are the sudder station of Agartala and the sub-divisional stations of Koylashar, Sonamura and Bilania, at each of which a bi-weekly market is held. Bisalgar and Udoypur -- two other seats of trade are situated in the interior of the State. In all these places and in others where there are markets, the shop-keepers are all Bengalis of the adjacent districts.

42. Besides the markets mentioned above, annual fairs are held in some places in which a good deal of buying and selling is carried on by the people. The most important of these fairs is that of Koylashar. It takes place every winter, and lasts for over a week. It is largely attended by Kukis and other hill-folks, and also by the

people of the adjacent tea estates of the district of Sylhet. Next to it is the fair of New Agartala, which is held on the 2nd day of every Bengali year. In it, things to the value of about Rs. 5,000 are sold in one day for which only it lasts.

43. In addition to the above, a good deal of traffic is carried on by itinerant Bengali dealers, who move about in the country both by land and by rivers. They visit the hill-people in their villages, and for the articles they sell, which are chiefly salt, tobacco, chillies, betelnuts, and molasses, they take cotton. They have, however, previously to obtain licenses from the Administration for permission thus to travel, which they get on payment of a fee of Re. 1 each in case of shoulder-borne trade, or of Rs. 2 to Rs. 30 each in that of river-borne traffic. The rates in the latter case differ according to the different extents upto which the particular streams along which the trade is to be carried on may be navigable. These fees are in addition to the export duty levied on cotton.

44. In a country like this, where the people are ignorant and poor, and live entirely on the produce of their agriculture, the value of import trade cannot be expected to be great. But where, on the other hand, the natural resources are large and splendid, the export trade should not fail to be important. The cotton produced in the State supplies in full all local want, and also considerably the want of other countries to which it is exported. The total quantity taken out of the State during the year was about the same as that of the previous year. The market price per maund was about Rs. 14 for clearn cotton and Rs. 5 for the uncleaned.

45. Taken collectively, the various kinds of the spontaneous produce of the hills which are exported in large quantities every year are, as a source of revenue, even of greater importance than cotton. All the neighboring districts depend chiefly upon this State for their supply of bamboos, timbers, thatching-grasses, &c., which are in constant demand, and are therefore constantly taken out from the hills that are literally inexhaustible in respect thereof. No statistics, however, are properly kept of the export trade. But during the year under review the total amount of export duty under all heads was Rs. 1,87,385 and the average rate of the duty was about 30 per cent. ad valorem. From these it is calculated that the entire value of the articles exported in the year was about Rs. 6,25,000, which is more than equal to the average value of the export trade of the previous three years.

46. Another important branch of the export trade of the country is that which relates to elephants. On the average about 100 wild elephants are caught and disposed of every year. The uninhabited tracts in the interior of the State about the sources of big rivers do all abound in elephants. The total number exported from the State during the year was 101 of the aggregate value of Rs. 54,000. The elephant-market during the year was unusually cheap.

47. Muh might be done to encourage the general trade of the country, and thereby to materially improve the condition of the people, and at the same time to increase in the long run the revenue of the State. In the first place, the export duty on cotton, which is now very high, being about 40 per cent. ad valorem, should be reasonably reduced. On account of this high rate neither the cultivator nor the trader finds his work profitable. Cotton is now grown less than formerly, and much of the produce often remains undispoed of at the end of the year. Reduction in the rate will promote both cultivation and trade, and thereby prove beneficial to the State.

48. In the second place, the numerous petty export and other duties realised under the names of the license

tax, the Khotagari - duty, the Pati mehal, the Gandaki mehal, &c., which do not bring to the State any considerable income, and which, on the other hand, are vexatious and harassing to the tradesmen, and prejudicial to the interests of the hill people, should be either entirely abolished or included in such general heads of income as might conveniently cover them. The management of many petty sources of revenue which are connected with any large trade, particularly when, as it is the case in this State, the sources are farmed out to different persons, must be attended not only with inconvenience to all concerned, but also frequently with hardship to those who are engaged in the trade.

49. Thus with regard to almost every Bankar Ghat or toll station, separate settlements are made under three heads, and sometimes more. The three heads are -- first, the true Bankar, or the fee for permission to export by the Ghat forest produce generally; second, Chankhola, or the rent for the land on which Chan, i.e., thatching grass to be passed by the ghat, grows; third, the Khotagari, or the duty for permission to land at the Ghat for examination, for purposes of assessment, the articles to be exported. The second is levied in addition to the first, and the third is in addition to both the first and second. Over and above these there is in some parts of the State the Fanti Ruk mehal.

50. The last-named mehal relates to unclaimed logs of timber. Such logs are treated as the property of the State. When floated down to a toll station by anybody, they are examined and disposed of by the police or by the farmer's men, according as the mehal is kept under khas management or let out in farms. In the Koylashar Division this mehal exists in respect of all the principal rivers on which toll stations are situated.

51. The vexatious Khotagari duty is levied not only on exportation by river of the spontaneous produce of the forests, but also on that of agricultural products. It was formerly known to be imposed on til (oil-seeds), but it has recently been extended to rice and paddy -- an extension which cannot be considered as well advised. For every new tax on trade in an agricultural produce is an additional burden, not on the tradesmen, but on the growers and the consumers. This extension was all the more unhappy in consequence of the fact that the subjects of His Highness' zemindary in Nurnagar and other parts of the district of Tipperah were far from being in easy circumstances on account of the short outturn of their crops in the last two seasons.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING

52. The resignation of the late Minister within so short a period of his appointment as six months became for a while a cause of anxiety to the Durbar and a subject of remark by the general public. People were loth to admit the refusal of Government to grant him traveling allowances as the main cause of his resignation.

53. There was no agitation during the year about the iniquitious water question referred to in previous reports. The question, however, has not been altogether dropped. If without spending any money and without causing any excitement, its promoters can gain their object, they may continue to get on with it. In Vikrampur, in Dacca, where the agitation was once very great, the people are beginning to forget the matter. The large expenditure that was incurred there on the subject has been of no benefit to His Highness, as he is now looked upon there precisely in the same light as before, i.e., before the question was broached. But in Tipperah the subject appears to be yet fresh in the minds of all; and it cannot be otherwise, unless the people are treated with moderation. From the appointment of Baboo Mohini Mohun Bardhan as Minister, the public, however, are becoming hopeful of a quiet termination of the movement for which the Baboo is known to have no sympathy.

54. In Hill Tipperah the public, in reality, have no voice of their own. They are neither able, nor have any

opportunity, to express an opinion relating to any matter, great or small. This is owing to the general want amongst them of educated persons fit to become leaders of parties and leaders of thought. It is owing to this want that whatever rules or proceedings are adopted by the State, they are implicitly obeyed by all concerned.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

55. The principal; changes under this head were the appointment, with full executive powers, of a Minister in succession to the old, and the bestowal of enlarged authority upon Mr. E. F. Sandys, the manager of the Maharajah's zemindaries in British territory. There is now no ground for the complaint which hitherto was very general, that the chief officers of the State are not possessed of sufficient powers for carrying on their work independently. It is to be hoped now that a free and judicious exercise of authority on the part of the responsible officers will lead to substantial improvements both in regard to the affairs of the State and those of the zemindaries.

56. Another new appointment made during the year is that of the officer in charge of the Maharajah's English office, who is employed on a salary of Rs. 125 a month, and who in addition to that office, has the police and other departments to look to. Hitherto the whole of his work was entrusted to a Dewan. The cause of the change is not known. The Assistant Magistrate of Agartala, who is a scion of a Thakur family and a son-inlaw of the Maharajah, was promoted to the charge of the Military Department with the title of Colonel, and was succeeded in his post by another Thakur. Both the appointments are honorary, carrying no pay.

57. During the year the control and supervision of the police and the cotton departments were, for each division, entrusted to one and the same officer under the designation of Superintendent. This was an important and necessary change. The persons appointed as Superintendents were already in His Highness' service; two of them, who heretofore were holding almost sinecure posts, are to receive for their new appointments the same pay as they used to draw before, while each of the remaining two has got a little increase to make up his pay equal to what is fixed for the post. viz., Rs. 50 a month. These Superintendents are, as they should be, subordinate to the Sub-divisional Officers. This arrangement, it is believed, will work advantageously, as it will admit of greater and comparatively more intelligent supervision being exercised over the two important departments than before. Pure police work in the State is small, and therefore the officers and the men of the department have always had revenue work to do in addition.

58. The Maharajah's Secretary's office which, as reported last year, was well nigh abolished, continues to exist, and is at present in its full strength again. This office costs the State about Rs. 5,000 a year, for which it cannot give an adequate return. On the other hand, it may tend to serve as a check upon the Minister's office and lessen its independence and usefulness.

59. Complaint of corruption against the Sudder Munsiff of Agartala was for a long time very general. It reached also this office. During the year the Maharajah, in deference to the wishes of the people, removed him from his place. He is a Thakur and a son-in-law of His Highness. The newly-appointed officer is also a Thakur. All the judicial officers of Agartala belong to that class.

60. The division of work into different departments, each with a responsible head officer of its own, as organised by the late Minister, continues to exist in the main. One of the principal acts of that officer was the separation of the management of the Maharajah's Sangsar, i.e., his household and private affairs, from the management of the State. This arrangement is said to have worked satisfactorily during the year under the

supervision of Thakur Naradhaj and Thakur Gopi Krishna Deb, both relations to His Higness the Maharajah. Thakur Gopi Krishna Deb used formerly to hold the post of the Civil and Sessions Judge of Agartala. The duties attached to that post have now been entrusted to the late Prime Minister, Thakur Dhananjoy Deb, who is a deservedly popular officer.

61. In regard to one important branch, however, the organisation of which was reported last year, greater attention is desirable than what has been hitherto paid. I allude to the branch of accounts. The importance of keeping this branch in a state of perfect efficiency cannot be overrated. The officer now in charge of the Maharajah's English office, whose time is understood to be fully occupied with other works, is said to be also the chief officer of the account department. As reported last year, under the arrangement originally made, the Maharajahs' Secretary was to act as the head account officer, his own office having been determined to be abolished.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

62. During the year a very considerable increase of revenue was obtained from resettlements of the principal forest Ghats. The work in this connection, as reported last year, was commenced by the late Minister. He completed it in respect of a few Ghats only. The work, however, was carefully followed and the total increase in revenue, which resulted from it, was Rs. 53,200, being less by Rs. 7,500 than the estimate made in paragraph 49 of the last annual report, as will be known from the statement given below :

Name of Ghat	Actual increase obtained. Rs.	Increase estimated last year Rs.
Mohari	7,000	7,000
Gumti	13,000	14,000
Haora	10,000	10,000
Sonai	2,400	3,000
Khowai	5,000	9,000
Dhalai	3,000	3,000
Manu	9,000	10,000
Thaljuri	3,800	4,700
Total	53,200	60,700

63. The marked difference between the actual increase and the estimate in regard to the Khowa Ghat is due to the fact that the Ghat is held in farm by an important Thakur of Agartala, who is a relation of His Highness, and possesses considerable influence in the Durbar. The jama which he agreed to pay of his own accord was accepted. The total increase secured under the new settlements is by no means the highest that could be obtained. Further increase is expected at the close of the present settlements, the terms of which vary from five to seven years.

64. In the meantime, however, it should be the endeavour of the Administration to give every facility to wood-cutters and others to export forest produce from the hills with all reasonable advantage. The rates of duty should be definitely fixed and widely circulated, and collection should be made under as few heads on any one article as possible.

65. The next department to be revised and improved is that of cotton, which also is capable of yielding a

substantial increase of revenue. The average annual income from this source for the last three years is Rs. 74,198. This amount, it is believed, may be raised to nearly a lakh, if proper supervision is exercised by the collecting officers and due encouragement is given by the State to the cultivators and traders. In 1880-81 the income from this head was Rs. 94,285.

66. After the cotton mehal has been put on a satisfactory footing, revision may be made of the arrangements under which the several elephant-hunting fields are worked. These fields are now chiefly farmed out to the Jubraj. The increase of revenue which has already been secured under the head of the forest Ghats, together with the probable increase derivable from cotton and the khedda mehals, will, it is hoped, be more than sufficient to establish an equilibrium between the income and expenditure of the State. At present the difference between the two is great, the expenditure exceeding the income largely.

67. Indeed, financial difficulties are yet as great as ever. The Minister, however, was able to liquidate a portion of the floating debt which bore interest at the extraordinary rate of from Rs. 30 to ,Rs. 70 per cent per annum. The amount paid up was comparatively small, and it was due chiefly to the relatives and dependents of the Maharajah. But the principal debts of the State, viz. those due to the money-lenders of Comillah, to the suppliers of provisions, and to the officers and servants of the Administration, remained undiminished. The handsome increase of revenue obtained from the Bankar Ghats does not seem to have been sufficient enough to be able to change for the better the financial condition of the Raj.

68. Not being able to make the two ends meet, the Administration is in the habit of issuing, in behalf of claimants, payment orders, or, as they are locally called, *barats* upon the farmers and other mofussil tehsildars. Frequently these orders are either dishonoured for want of funds or are cashed at high rates of discount. Even the courts of justice have their shares of such orders to be paid out of their income, and the case is not unfrequent when an amount of fine realised from a criminal, having been spent in payment of such or other orders, cannot in time be refunded to him on his getting acquitted and becoming entitled to the refund under orders of the appellate court. Indeed, the strain is so great that even a sum of money deposited for an accused in a criminal court as security for his attendance cannot be returned to him for several months after his discharge.

69. These *barats* cause no small amount of inconvenience and trouble both to the officers to whom they are addressed and to the holders thereof. At the suggestion of this office, which was approved of by Political Agent Mr. F. H. B. Skrine, the late Minister revoked all old *barats* from all quarters, and stopped the issue of any fresh ones. The present Minister, however, found it expedient to revert to the old system and to grant the issue of *barats* without much restriction. During the year under review several persons having claims against the Raj on account of arrears of pay, &c., had to apply to the Agency for help, their petitions to the Administration not having produced any result. Amongst them was the late Minister himself, who has not yet been able to obtain in full the arrears of his pay. The *barat* system alluded to here is in contemplation of being discontinued.

70. In drawing the attention of the Administration to this office request for the supply of the annual returns for the last year, I once referred to the Government letter No. 1637P, dated the 9th may 1887, addressed to His Highness, and stated as follows :

"I am not aware, however, that the finances of the State are 'steadily showing a growing surplus.' It is certainly a matter for congratulation if the fact is so. But I very much regret to have to say that the general report of things and the state of affairs, both here and in the interior, point to the contrary. The statement of

expenditure referred to above, if furnished, will, it is hoped, show how the matter really stands. I beg to request that the statement may be supplied in the forms approved of by the Political Agent, and forwarded to your office with my No. IIC, dated the 5th February 1883."

71. The usual return showing the receipts of the year has been supplied, but no account of the State expenditure has come in. It was proposed that the Maharajah's household and private expenses might be shown in a lump, and not in detail. But the Durbar perhaps considers it derogatory to furnish a return of its expenditure. Such a return, if duly prepared, would greatly serve the interests of the State, as it would lead to timely accounts being prepared in every branch of the administration, and also to reductions being effected where necessary. It is understood that for want of reliable information, no complete budget estimates for any year can be prepared and passed in proper time. The present Minister is showing laudable zeal in collecting necessary figures for preparing a budget for the current year, but though the year has already run a fourth part of its course, the work is not known to have been yet finished.

72. From the receipt return of the Maharajah's office, it appears that the entire collection of the year under report was Rs. 2,89,910, against Rs. 2,43,884 of the previous year, and Rs. 2,34,171, the average of the preceding three years. Except land revenue from the plain lands, all the principal sources of income yielded a considerable increase which, on the whole amounted to Rs. 49,096 against a total decrease under other heads of Rs. 3,070. The net increase, therefore, was Rs. 46,026, as shown in the return. The chief sources of revenue were the following.

73. *Land revenues from the plain lands.* -- The income under this head was Rs. 40,656, against Rs. 41,044 of the previous year. Nearly the whole of the plains under cultivation is let out either in taluks or in farms, only a comparatively small portion being held under direct management. If it were not for this, the income from this source would be about double of what it is. Almost all the principal taluks are held by relatives and dependents of the Maharajah at low rates of rent. This is an unsatisfactory state of things, but scarcely avoidable in a Government which is personal.

74. *Family tax on the hills.* -- As mentioned before in paragraph 19, this tax is collected at different rates, from Rs. 2 to Rs. 8 per family per year. The higher rates are prevalent in the southern parts of the State. The collection made under this head during the year amounted to Rs. 23,840, giving an increase of Rs. 1,920 compared with the receipts of the previous year. This satisfactory result is said to be due to greater care and attention on the part of the collecting officers, who succeeded in realising a portion of the arrears of the previous years.

75. *Tax on forest produce.* -- This is a most elastic source of income. Under the settlements effected during the year the revenue has been doubled; and further increase is still expected in future. The actual annual increase secured during the year is Rs. 53,200, as shown above in paragraph 62. The total collection of the year, however, was Rs. 89,520 which compared with the receipts of the previous year, viz., Rs. 57,511, shows an increase of Rs. 32,009 only. This is owing to the fact that many of the new settlements came into effect some months after the commencement of the year.

76. *Tax on forest produce on the river Feni.* -- The management of the Feni toll station continued to remain in the hands of the Government Forest Department. The income of the year under report, as shown in the statement, represents the receipts on account of the previous year. The decrease of Rs. 1,834 is believed to

be mainly due to the orders under which the jungle produce of the Regulation District of Chittagong has been allowed to be passed free.

77. *Tax on cotton and oil-seeds.* -- The cotton produce of the year was below the average. But, as was the case in the previous year, the oil-seed crop was a full one. For this reason, and for the supervision of the officers employed during the year, the revenue under this head increased from Rs. 64,351 to Rs. 67,259. The latter figure is less by Rs. 2,511 than the average of the preceding three years.

78. *Royalty on elephants caught.* -- Altogether one hundred and seventeen wild elephants were captured during the year against about 130 of the previous season. Khedda operations in the State are carried on by farmers, who pay royalty at the rate of from 25 to 30 per cent. ad valorem. The income of the year was Rs. 18,250, against Rs. 14,558 of the previous year. The increase is said to be due to the fact that one of the khedda fields, viz., the one situated up the Gumti, and called the "Umarsagar Mehal", was not worked during the previous year. In the year under report over 50 elephants were caught here, and they fetched good pricess, although the general state of the market was very dull in other places.

79. *Law and Justice.* -- The income which properly belonged to this head was Rs. 4,221 as fines, Rs. 9,708 as stamp duty and court-fees, and Rs. 2,558 as process fees, or altogether Rs. 16,487, which shows an increase of Rs. 2,871 on the total receipts of the previous year. The increase was due to the rise in the value of civil suits and in the number of licenses, both original and renewed, granted to pleaders. The income under this head was more than sufficient to meet the expenses of the courts.

80. *Excise.* -- Poppy is allowed to be cultivated in the State, but the cultivation is carried on in a limited scale, and the quantity of opium manufactured locally is not sufficient to meet the demands of the country. With regard to this article, therefore, as well as with regard to ganja and European liquor, supplies have to be obtiained from shops in British territory. Country spirit is manufactured in the plains under licenses granted by the Administration. In the hills, the people make their own liquor without taking any pass for the same or paying any fee. Almost all the licensed liquor shops were at first too close to the British borders -- a circumstance which was found favorable for smuggling being carried on. The fact was accordingly brought to the notice of the Durbar, and it was suggested that the shop might be removed to a proper distance from the boundary. In accordance with the advice of the Commissioner, it has been arranged with the Durbar that there should be no shop within one mile of the border, and the rule is being carried out. The small decrease of Rs. 106 under this head is stated to be due to the working of this rule.

81. *Other heads of revenue.* -- The increase of Rs. 690 under the head of Khotagari and of Rs. 1,037 under that of rents on markets is said to be the result of revenue settlements. Realisation of a portion of the arrears on account of the previous year increased the income from the Adda mehal from Rs. 3,218 to Rs. 4,377. As mentioned in previous reports, Adda is a chowkidari tax, and it was evidently introduced for the purpose of meeting the expenses of village watch. No such watch, however, is maintained, and no chowkidar is employed anywhere, except at head-quarters and at the sub-divisional stations. The revenue from the buffalo-grazing mehal is collected from British subjects. Formerly the rates were annas 8 for each calf and Re. 1 for each full grown buffalo for a year. They were raised during the year to Re. 1 and Rs. 1-8 respectively. The increase in the rates has, it is understood, compelled several parties to remove their buffaloes from the State to the hills of Chittagong. No charge is made on account of buffaloes belonging to the resident subjects of the Maharajah. The fluctuations under the other heads of the revenue are not noticeable.

82. The accounts given above relate to His Highness' income from his hill territory. The proceeds of his zemindaries were mostly spent in paying the Government revenue and in meeting the charges for management. The estates are large and splendid, covering an area of about 600 square miles of cultivated lands. They should yield a large net income every year. But the collection of rent was as difficult as in the previous years. This was owing to want of proper settlement of revenue and to want of fellow-feeling between the ryots and the collecting officers. As long as careful and reliable survey is not made and proper settlements not effected, the difficulties of collection cannot be expected to be over. As for the want of good feeling between the tehsil officers and the ryots, it is due mainly to the short durations for which the former are allowed to hold office. Tehsil officers should be allowed to remain in charge for a sufficiently long time in order to be able to gain the respect and confidence of the people. They ought to be properly guided, but not frequently changed, as has been the practice of late.

83. There has not been any acquisition of new zemindari since the establishment of this office. The management of the old has continued to remain in much the same state as before. Formerly farming system was much in vogue, and the farmers were allowed to held on for long durations. One of the great evils of the system was the opportunity it afforded for false lakherajes being created. The number of such lakherajes in thana Chagalnaya in Noakhali is not small. Under the advice of the Agency, khas management was introduced in several cases, but for want of a superior officer at head-quarters, it was not hitherto very successful. Now that a head officer has been appointed to look to affairs in every direction, it is hoped that the management of the zemindaries will be improved. During the year the Durbar did not show any particular desire to let out the estates in putni leases.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME, AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

84. In the hill and amongst the Manipuris, crime is a rare occurrence. The Bengali portion of the population of the country, to which the criminals usually belong, is not more than 36,843 on the whole. Crime should, therefore, be small in the State. Were it not for the fact that there are too many pleaders and also too many courts of justice in the country, the number of cases would be fewer than at present. There are now on the whole about 130 pleaders enrolled under the rules of the State. The number of courts having original jurisdiction is five. Considering, however, the extent of the country in which the courts are distributed, their number cannot conveniently be reduced. But their presiding officers, who are also revenue officers, would do well if they discouraged the institution of groundless cases, and employed their time and attention chiefly to effecting extension of cultivation, settlement of land revenue, and to supervising the cotton and the forest mehals.

85. As already mentioned above in paragrahp 57, a head police officer, under the title of Superintendent, was appointed during the year to each division of the state on a salary of Rs. 50 per mensem. Two police outpost, viz., those of Kurti and Bamutia, were abolished as being unnecessary, and there were maintained at the close of they year fourteen police stations and four outposts on the whole. These numbers are sufficient for all requirements. Under the rules of the new Minister, each police-station is to have one daroga or naib-daroga, one head-constable and eight constables. The number of constables hitherto employed has generally been four for each station.

86. The police of the State are kept as much in arrears of pay as the members of the other departments of His Highness' service. The judicial officers, viz., those who are employed in Agartala and who belong to the Thakur family, do not get any salary. For their private expenses they receive pocket-money, the amount of

which in every case is small. They are, however, allowed to take farms and hold taluks from which they derive good income. These farms and taluks are sometimes allowed to be held within their own jurisdiction, which is objectionable.

87. The administration of civil justice is not attended with any difficulty. The system of land tenure in existence in the country is simple. Contested cases involving questions of title are few, and those that occur are comparatively of easy character. The procedure followed in the courts, both civil and criminal, is in the main the same as that in force in courts of British territory, though the fact is not openly recognised. The administration, however, has a few simple enactments of its own. The subjects of the State have sufficient respect for the courts, and look upon them with confidence. But this is not the case with outsider in general, whose views on the subject are different. During the year this office had to bring to the notice of the Durbar the irregular and dilatory proceedings of the courts in several cases, both civil and criminal, in which British subjects were concerned.

88. The courts, both original and appellate, were, as regards their number and constitution, the same as in the previous year. The Jubraj or the heir-elect of the State continued to act as the presiding officer of the chief, i.e., the khas appellate court. Recently he inspected the lower courts and the jail of Agartala, and evinced a desire for improving their condition. His proceedings in this respect deserve commendation. The work done by the several courts and by the police is shown in detail in the accompanying judicial statements - 1 to 9 of which the following is a summary.

89. *(1) Statement of criminal cases investigated by the police.* -- Including ten cases of the previous year, the total number for investigation was 255, being less by 15 than the total number of the preceding year. Investigation was completed in 229 cases, viz., in 177 successfully and in 52 unsuccessfully. The remaining 26 were under enquiry at the close of the year. The total number of persons arrested and brought to trial was 316, of whom 231 were convicted, 64 were acquitted or discharged, 2 died, and 19 remained under trial. It will be thus seen that the investigation was successful in 77.3 per cent. of the cases, and that conviction was obtained in 73.1 per cent. of the persons tried -- a result which speaks well of the police.

90. *(2) Statement of criminal cases.* - Altogether 612 cases with 890 persons, or 1.4 person per case on the average, came up before the several courts of the State for trial during the year. Compared with the figures of the previous year, there was a decrease of 40 cases with an increase of 71 persons. Of these, 158 cases were rejected and 409 cases with 836 persons were tried, 582 persons, or 69.6 per cent., being convicted, and 254 persons, or 30.4 per cent., being acquitted or discharged. The remaining 45 cases with 51 persons were under trial at the close of the year. Heinous offences were only three, viz., one case of murder and two cases of culpable homicide. In these case six persons, viz., five British subjects and one a subject of the State, were altogether brought to trial, of whom three -- all British subjects -- were convicted; two, viz., one a British subject and one a subject of the State, were acquitted; and one, a British subject, remained under trial at the close of the year. The convicted persons were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment with hard labour. Capital punishment was not inflicted upon any.

91. *(3) Statement showing the result of appeals in criminal cases.* - There were 88 cases of appeal in the lower appellate court, viz., 87 new and one old. Of these, 82 were disposed of and six remained pending at the close of the year. In three cases the appeals were rejected; in 29 the sentences of the courts were confirmed; while in 50 they were either modified or reverted -- a result which, as pointed out last year, does not reflect credit

upon the lower courts. In 16 cases the orders of the appellate court were carried up to the court of khas appeal, where, including the one of the previous year, there were only 17 cases for disposal, of which 16 were disposed of and one remained pending. There is improvement observed in the working of both the appellate courts.

92. *(4) Statement of criminal cases in which British subjects were concerned.* - Together with 15 pending cases of the previous year, there were 221 cases in which British subjects were concerned, viz., in 44 as complainants and in 177 as defendants. In 44 cases of the latter, both the parties were British subjects. In connection with these cases, 242 persons were altogether brought to trial, of whom 173, or 74.2 per cent. were convicted, and 60, or 25.8 per cent., were acquitted or discharged, while two escaped from custody and seven remained under trial at the close of the year. These figures compared with those of statement No. 2 show that there was one case concerning British subjects out of every 2.8 that occurred, and that there was one British subject in every 3.6 persons tried, or in every 3.4 persons convicted.

93. *(5) Statement of criminal cases in which warrants were issued under the Extradition Act.* - During the year warrants were issued for the arrest of 16 offenders who had absconded from this territory. The number of such offenders against whom warrants had remained unexeceuted at the end of the previous year was 20. Of these 36 persons, two only were arrested and brought up. They were made over to the tribunal of the State where, together with another such offender who had surrendered himself of his own accord, they were tried and convicted. All of them were British subjects.

94. *(6) Statement of criminal cases certified for trial in British territory.* - There were only three such cases, viz., two of the year under report and one of the previous year. The courts in which they were made over for trial dismissed them on account of non-appearance of the complainants. Cases certified for trial in British territory are seldom persecuted even when both the parties are British subjects -- a circumstance which shows that certificates are ordinarily issued in cases in which extradition of accused persons is applied for by the Administration without sufficient grounds.

95. *(7 and 7A) Statements of civil suits, original.* - The number of regular suits increased from 243 to 285, and the value thereof from Rs. 14,117-6-10 to Rs. 44,892-3-4. The value of one suit instituted by a British subject was particularly high. The average value of each suit was Rs. 157-8-3, against Rs. 58-1-6 of the previous year. Of the total value of Rs. 44,892-6-4, the sum of Rs. 7,046-15-6 only, or about 16.6 per cent., was decreed. This appears to be a very low rate. The suits were of the following description, viz., 139 bond-suits, 20 suits for goods sold, 6 suits for damages, 46 rent suits, 38 possessory suits, and 36 suits of other descriptions.

96. *(8) Statement showing the results of appeals in civil suits.* - There were altogether 61 cases of appeal, of which 50 were disposed of and 11 remained pending. In nine cases the orders of the lower courts were reversed, in three they were modified, and in 11 orders of remandment were passed; while in 20 the decisions appealed against were confirmed, and in 7 the appeals were rejected. The number of appeals was nearly half of the number of contested cases; and the appellants were more or less successful in about half of the number disposed of. These facts do not speak favourably of the lower courts. There were 20 appeals before the khas appellate court, of which 18 were disposed of and two remained pending at the close of the year.

97. *(9) Statement of civil suits in which British subjects were concerned.* - The number of these suits rose from 83 to 124. In 66 of them British subjects were plaintiffs, in 21 they were defendants, and in 37 they were

both plaintiffs and defendants. The increase in the number of the suits indicates increase of the business carried on by British subjects in the State. It will be seen from the figures given here, and in the statement mentioned above, that there was one suit concerning British subjects in every 2.3 that were instituted.

JAILS.

98. The number of jails was four, as reported last year. The total number of prisoners at the close of the year was 59, viz., 51 in the Agartala jail and 8 in that of Bilania, against 75 of the previous year. Their average daily attendance was 48.1, i.e., 46 at the Agartala jail and 2.1 at the three sub-divisional jails put together, against 42, the total average daily attendance of the previous year. There is a rule in force in the State, under which a prisoner sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour can get his sentence commuted to one of simple imprisonment on payment of an amount of fine equal to the price of his labour. The rule is not often put into practice, as the prisoners are generally too poor to make any payment in cash. The number of escapes from the jails was the same as reported last year, viz., six.

99. The prisoners are treated with consideration and care in respect of their diet and house accommodation. The sick also are treated with due attention. On the occasion of Her majesty the Queen-Empress' Jubilee, five prisoners were set free from the Agartala Jail. And lately when the Jubraj visited the institution, two of the prisoners were liberated in his honour.

MILITARY.

100. The number of guard-posts was altogether six, viz., three in the Koylashar division two in the Udoypur division, and one in the Bilania Division. I visited all of them during the year, and found that they were good as regards their numerical strength. The discipline and efficiency of the men employed in them were indifferent, while the supply of ammunition was poor. No arms and ammunition are manufactured in the State, the Administration getting its supplies from British territory on licenses granted by Government. The last supply was brought in the year 1880. A fresh indent is now necessary, in respect of which a license has been already obtained.

101. As will be known from the annexed return, the Maharajah's army consists of 270 men, rank and file. Of these, 150 only are good and reliable and fit for active service in the fields. Some of the officers were formerly in the service of Government. They are intelligent and active, and they know their work pretty well. Of the entire number of men, 128 are Bengalis, viz., 9 Hindus, 108 Mahomedans and 11 Christians. These are mostly unreliable. Amongst the remainder, there are 65 Gurkhas, 8 Assamese, 52 Hindustanis and 17 Tipperahs and Manipuris. Like the members of the other branches of the Administration, the sepoys also are allowed to remain largely in arrears of pay. They are therefore generally discontented. Many are willing to leave His Highness' service, but are obliged to stay on account of their pay having fallen in arrears, which they could not easily realise, if they left.

102. Besides the guard-posts mentioned above, there is kept, in the winter season, secret watch at different places in advanced position. About the end of January last, the men of the secret watch of Saidabari perceived in the hills some foot-prints of men, and not being able to ascertain who had visited the parts, thought that some Lushai party might be moving there in secret, and got frightened. They communicated the news to their village, on which their women and children left for the plains. The information spread around, and in a short time all the Kukibaris in the adjacent hills sent their families and children to places close to the villages in the plain

country. The people, however, soon found that they were mistaken and that there was no cause for any fear, and so they got back to their homes. The officer in charge of the Koylashar post went round the hills and re-assured the people. With the exception of this occurrence, the frontier was perfectly peaceful throughout the year.

EDUCATION

103. The total number of schools decreased from 18 to 16, the two girls' schools returned last year having disappeared. This caused a slight reduction in the total number of students, which fell from 432 to 424. The average daily attendance per school was about 20. Nine of the schools and patshalas belong to the Koylashar division, and the remaining seven to the other divisions of the State. The Agartala school and the sub-divisional schools of Koylashar and Sonamura are held with regularity. The rest of the institutions are ephemeral patshalas.

104. The Manipuris are gradually showing a desire for putting their children in schools. Several of their villages have patshalas of their own, which are maintained at their own expense. In its present embarrassed condition the Administration cannot afford to do much for the spread of education amongst its subjects, but the matter is one which ought to receive its best attention. A great deal could be effected if some intelligent and promising lads were brought from amongst the Manipuris and Tipperahs and educated in the Agartala school at the expense of the State, on condition that at the close of their training they should set up patshalas in their villages and serve as teachers thereof. The expense of the State, under an arrangement of this kind, would not be considerable, but effect produced would be of material good to the people. The success of a scheme like this would, however, depend much upon the state of efficiency of the Agartala school. At present, as reported in previous years, it is not what it should be as the teachers are paid with great irregularity, and the wants of the institution are attended to with indifference.

105. There should also be established some connecting link between the Agartala school and schools of higher classes in British territory. The curriculum of the former might be fixed in accordance with that of the latter. The stipends allowable to successful students at the final examination held under the rules of the State, which cannot serve their purpose on account of there being no higher schools in the country, might be made tenable in schools in British territory. This matter, as reported last year, was brought to the notice of the Durbar, but it has not yet produced any result.

106. Finding the prospect of the Agartala school not hopeful, several of the Thakurs' children have gone to Comillah for purposes of study, while some have gone to Calcutta, their expenses being chiefly borne by His Highness. An efficient school at the capital of the State is highly desirable. For the education of His Highness' own children who, as reported in previous years, do not attend public schools, there are private tutors employed. The Jabraj and the Bara Thakur, who are the two next heirs to the gadi, are now both above the school going age. For their training it is necessary, as has been pointed out in previous reports, that they should be given opportunities for moving out of the precincts of Agartala.

DISPENSARIES.

107. There is a dispensary at each of the sub-divisional stations of the country, and there are two at Agartala. Records are, however, duly kept in those of New Agartala, Sonamura, and Koylashar. In these, with the 58 old patients of last year, 4,423 persons received medicines during the year under report. Amongst these, 4,032

or 91.2 per cent., were cured, and 27 remained under treatment at the close of the year. Of the rest, 320 discontinued attendance, and 44 or 1 per cent. died. Surgical operations were performed in 110 cases, and vaccine operations in 4,296. Amongst the total number of persons treated, there were three in-door patients at Agartala, of whom one died and two were cured. The prevailing diseases of the year were, as before, fever, bowel-complaints, skin diseases and sores.

108. The supply of medicines and surgical instruments kept in the Agartala dispensary is sufficient. The Maharajah is particularly careful to keep a good stock of medicine in hand in the Rajbari from which the dispensary ordinarily draws its supply. The case is, however, not so with regard to the mofussil dispensaries, which are not always sufficiently well provided in this respect.

POST OFFICE.

109. The Government Post Office connected with the Agency worked as satisfactorily during the year as before. Its condition is gradually becoming more prosperous. The remittance made through it during the year by means of money-orders and insured covers rose respectively from Rs. 53,534 and Rs. 10,553 to Rs. 54,471 and Rs. 15,299. These results are due to the improved condition of the trading business in Agartala. The expenditure of the office was increased during the year from Rs. 39 to Rs. 49 a month.

THE STATE OF COMMUNICATION.

110. No noticeable action was taken by the Administration during the year to improve the state of the communications of the country. The lahars or hill-paths were as usual, out or re-cleared in some instances, and also a few temporary bamboo bridges were put upon the new Agartala road which leads to the boundary on the side of British territory. As for financial difficulties, the State was unable to properly bridge the latter. Your predecessor offered to get the work done out of the Road Cess Funds of Comillah, of which His Highness as a zemindar of Tipperah was a great contributor. The Durbar, however, did not show its readiness to accept the offer, which accordingly produced no result.

111. Hitherto in their way to the guard post of the country, the armed sepoys of the State used occasionally to travel through British territory without previously obtaining permission for the purpose. That such permission is necessary under the Arms Act rules has been pointed out to the Mahrajah's office, to which the instruction of the Commissioner on the subject about passes being taken from the Agency has also been communicated. This, it is believed, will lead to the desirable result of necessary communications being opened between the principal stations of the country.

112. Roads of moderate width, such as may be used as foot-paths and elephant tracks cannot be costly, as they require chiefly the clearance of jungle, little or no earthwork being generally necessary, nor any expensive bridge-work either. Between Agartala, the headquarters of the State, and the sub-divisional station of Sonamura, communication by river can be carried on nearly all the year round. The other two sub-divisions are not so accessible. River communication in the interior of the State is not easy on account of the streams being shallow, and there being numerous snags in their beds, and almost impenetrable jungle on their sides.

BOUNDARY MATTERS.

113. Many of the masonry pillars which mark the common boundary of this State and the district of Tipperah have been broken, while some have been entirely destroyed. These latter are required to be replaced, and

arrangements have accordingly been made for the purpose. The work of sufficiently marking the boundary between Noakhali and Hill Tipperah has not been continued.

114. As might have been understood in the beginning, the final result of the enquiry made by the professional surveyor regarding the situation of the disputed Tipperah punjis, alluded to in the last annual report, has been unfavourable to the State. Not only have all these punjis been found to be lying well within British territory, but three other villages hitherto not claimed by the Sylhet authorities have also been found to be situated within their jurisdiction. That such would be the result I explained to the Maharajah's office in the beginning. From the Assam Government letter No. 7421, dated the 13th November 1884, it was clear that the hamlets could not belong to Hill Tipperah. The dispute was pending from 1878 when the Sylhet police, who visited the punjis for the purpose of assessing the chowkidari tax, were attacked by the Tipperahs, and one of them, viz., a chowkidar, was arrested and brought over to Agartala, where he was released at the intervention of the Political Agent.

115. Besides the above, several other disputes were raised by the Administration during the year in connection with different parts of the boundary. In the course of my cold weather tour I visited nearly all the disputed places, but nowhere found that the Administration had any just cause for complaint. In one instance the surveyor alluded to above made a professional enquiry, and found that the claim put forward by the Maharajah's office was not tenable.

116. The boundary between the State and British territory was defined and marked on the ground jointly by officers of both the States. No question should therefore be now raised about it without very good and sufficient reason. Some of the disputes referred to above were identically the same as those that were once brought forward by the Administration about the time of the revenue survey of Sylhet, and were duly enquired into and settled by arbitrators.

117. In 1874, Government fixed the river Longai as the eastern boundary of the State. Lately the Administration asked for permission to extend the boundary as far as the Dhaleshari river. The subject has been separately reported on.

MISCELLANEOUS.

118. The municipality of Agartala continued to be supervised by the second heir to the State, viz., the Bara Thakur, through whose exertions a portion of the main road of Old Agartala was metalled during the year, and some improvement was effected in matters affecting the sanitary condition of the town.

119. Babu Gobind Chandra Das, Agency clerk, who is an intelligent and trustworthy officer, discharged his duties most satisfactorily throughout the year. During my absence on privilege leave he was in charge of the office.

1-JUDICIAL

Statement of cases investigated by the Police in 1886-87

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENCE	CASES					PERSONS.					
				Investigated							
	Under investigation at the close of the previous year	Reported during the year.	Total	Successfully	Unsuccessfully.	Under investigation at the close of the year	Arrested and brought to trial.	Convicted.	Acquitted or discharged	Died, escaped, or transferred	Under trial at the close of the year
AGARTALA DIVISION											
Magistrate's court											
1. Serious offences against the person	1	7	8	4	4	...	12	8	4	...	..
2. Minor Ditto ditto	...	28	28	20	8	...	25	20	5	...	..
3. Serious Ditto property	...	4	4	3	1	...	5	1	1	...	3
4. Minor Ditto ditto	2	43	45	31	14	...	56	46	10	...	..
5. Miscellaneous	...	33	33	25	8	...	48	44	4	...	..
Total	3	115	118	83	35	...	146	119	24	...	3
Assistant Magistrate's Court											
1. Serious offences against the person	...	1	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	..
2. Minor Ditto ditto	...	3	3	3	...	...	4	4	...	...	..
3. Serious Ditto property	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..
4. Minor Ditto ditto	...	29	29	20	9	...	25	14	11	...	..
5. Miscellaneous	...	3	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	..
Total	...	56	36	23	13	...	29	18	11	...	..
UDOYPUR DIVISION											
Sonamura Court											
1. Serious offences against the person	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2. Minor Ditto ditto	1	3	4	3	...	1	3	3	...	...	...
3. Serious Ditto property	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4. Minor Ditto ditto	2	15	17	14	...	3	14	10	3	1	...
5. Miscellaneous	...	1	1	1	...	...	35	35	...	...	...
Total	3	19	22	18	...	4	52	48	3	1	...

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR
1887-88

No. 1483 - XVI - 11, dated Comillah, the 28th June 1888.
From - J. C. Price, Esq, Magistrate and Political Agent, Tipperah,
To - The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

I have the honour to forward herewith the Administration Report of Hill Tipperah for the year 1887.88, received from the Assistant Political Agent on the 21st instant.

2. *Preliminary observation* - The submission of the Assistant Political Agent's report has been delayed owing to the Maharajah's officers not furnishing him in time with the figures required for the usual statements.

3. The report is full and interesting, though very much shorter than those of former years. This is quite in accordance with the recent orders of Government. It points out clearly the evils from which the State has suffered for years past. I will, therefore, in my remarks, confine myself to an exposition of such matters only as I deem of the greatest interest, and, at the same time, of vital importance to the Raj, viz, the causes of the present deplorable condition of Hill Tipperah, and the measures I would suggest for its rescue.

4. *Old Reports.* - I have carefully perused the annual reports and resolutions for the past ten years in order to ascertain what have been the recognized defects in the administration, and whether the remedies suggested have been adopted; and if so, with what success. I find that the same complaints have been made year after year; that suggestions in plenty, and good advice in profuse liberality, have been annually offered; but that no heed whatever has ever been paid to what each one of the four authorities, from the Assistant Political Agent to His Honour the Lieutenant - Governor, has written. Last year after having acquainted myself with the affairs of the State during two visits to Agartola, not only by perusal of old records, but also by personal enquiry from the present experienced and intelligent Assistant Political Agent, and others in Hill and British Tipperah capable of giving me reliable information, I determined to use my endeavours to secure whatever sympathetic advice and friendly help could effect in the improvement of the administration.

5. *Expected reforms* - With the appointment of a new Minister, and the bestowal of increased and more suitable power on the Manager, I had looked forward to find some vitality infused into the administration; if there was not much comfort to be had in a contemplation of the condition of the Raj, I was at any rate free to indulge in all kinds of pleasant anticipations for its future. Unfortunately, not a single one of many expectations has been realized; not a single ray of hope illumines the prospect before us if the State is allowed to pursue the downward course it has so long and persistently followed.

6. *New Minister* - The new Minister, Baboo Mohini Mohun Burdhan, the Government Pleader of this district, on two years' leave, which expires next November, has, in spite of his long acquaintance with the affairs of the Raj, its rular, and its officers, and of the intelligence, activity, and cleverness with which the Assistant Political Agent credits him, proved utterly wanting in every essential of a Minister. By his incapacity and petulance of temper, developed during his incumbency, he has forfeited, if he ever possessed, the confidence of the Princes, the Thakurs, the people of the State, and the public within and without the Raj. In short, he has amply justified the estimate formed of him by my predecessor, who wrote of the then recently appointed Minister in these words -

"Baboo Mohini Mohan Burdhan is on his trial. I have given him a free hand, and I wish him success, but am doubtful whether he is strong enough to carry out steps which alone can save His Highness from what is practically insolvency".

No, 282 - XVI- 9, dated 28th January 1887.

7. By the Minister's unnecessary and injudicious impatience of the most reasonable calls which I have been, from time, obliged to make on the State to enforce the observance of Government orders and rules, more particularly in respect of the situation of excise shops, of the rendition of accused persons, of the service of summons on witnesses issued from British Courts (a matter in which Mr. Secretary Cockerell wrote in his letter No. 2842, dated 11th July 1878, that any disinclination on the part of the Maharajah's government would be viewed by the Lieutenant - Governor with the greatest disapproval), and also in respect of the long and unjustifiable detention of prisoners under trial; and of other questions regarding law and order, I have been very often sorely tempted to seek the intervention of Government. Applications for extradition of offenders to the authorities of the State have been often unnecessarily made by the Durbar, and I have observed in several cases that extraordinary delay has occurred in the disposal of cases in which British subjects have been handed over to the State under the extradition rules. The most objectionable practice of confining persons in places other than the jail has been brought to light. The Minister has done nothing to put a stop to it, as he ought to have done as soon as ever it came to his knowledge. I felt. however, that it was not fair to allow the eccentricities of an incapable servant to induce me to take any steps which might prove prejudicial to the State. I went up to Agartola in November, and in a private interview I brought several matters to the notice of the Maharaja, who heard all I had to say, and promised to adopt measures speedily to obviate further references. From what transpired at the meeting, I came to the conclusion that the Maharajah himself had no very great confidence in his Minister; and that it was not unlikely that he would dispense with his services, having already given him a year's trial.

8. I have indicated above three causes of the Minister's failure, viz, incapacity, petulance, and loss of the Maharajah's confidence. A fourth defect which has consummated, as it were, the extinction of every hope that he will ever be able to effect any good, is that he has allied himself with the clique, headed by the Secretary, which has from the very first been the curse of the State and its rular. This disgraceful alliance has been the chief cause of the Minister's having lost whatever he possessed of the respect of those interested in the welfare of the Raj in British or Hill Tipperah. Having identified himself with this clique, he is justly regarded as one of the enemies of the State by its well-wishers. One of the results of this alliance has been the dismissal of the Manager, Mr. Sandys, who was in my opinion the one man who had the knowledge, ability, and desire necessary to save the Raj from ruin.

9. Manager's dismissal -- All the hopes formed from this gentlemen's appointment, as expressed in the Resolution, dated 8th September 1885, have been swept away by the step the Maharajah has taken in regard to Mr. Sandys. He was tried on a string of paltry and obviously absurd charges, investigated into and reported on by the Minister and one of the prime-movers in the disgraceful "Water agitation," which was the most important of the functions of the clique. Finding its power and profits seriously threatened by the determined efforts made by the Manager, when invested with the necessary powers, to rescue the Raj from the poverty and degradation which had made its very name a by-word in Eastern Bengal, its members did everything they could to get rid of him. Immediately following on the Manager's dispoasl was the resumption of the disreputable practice, that had been stopped by Mr. Sandays, of borrowing money to meet the Government revenue. In the words of the Assistant Political Agent the Manager paid the "government revenue without difficulty," and further on "the Manager himself had obtained increased pay and additional powers, but he was not able to

	Paras.
Reports for 1884-85	
Assistant Political Agent's	39
Commissioner 's	8
	Pages
Resolution	5 & 6
	Paras.
Report for 1887-88	
Assistant Political Agents	5
Ditto Ditto	27

enjoy them long. As to the manner of works, the introduction by Mr. E.F. Sandys of certain check forms in the Account Department was an improvement on the former state of things."

10. The Secretary. - - Form all sources I hear that the Secretary, so frequently and unfavourably noticed in the marginally-noted reports and resolutions since his appointment in 1879, has obtained a most extraordinary and undeserved ascendancy over his weak-minded master, who whatever his other qualifications may be, is completely under this man's baneful influence.

	Paras.
Reports for 1879-80	
Assistant Political Agent's	62
Reports for 1882-83	
Assistant Political Agent's	8-11
Commissioner's	3
Resolution	2 & 6
Reports for 1885-86	
Assistant Political Agent's	41
Reports for 1886-87 -	
Commissioner's	12
Assistant Political Agent's	58

11. The indecision and indolence noticed in the Mahajah for years past have increased to such an extent, that to secure his attention even for a few minutes, to the most urgent calls of business, is almost impossible of attainment to any one, expect to the Secretary, who taking the fullest advantage of his situation and his master's carelessness, in all save purely personal matters, actually governs, or rather misgoverns, the State to his own advantage, and to that of the clique, of which he is the leader and main support. A perusal of the references noted in the margin will show that the Secretary and his following have persistently and consistently thwarted every effort made towards improvement by the last Ministers, Thakur Dhanunjoy and Baboo Dina Nath Sen, the real reason of whose resignation is an open secret. He clearly perceived that, so long as the Secretary had any connection whatsoever in any capacity with the Maharajah or the Raj, his sinister influence would predominate. I have had other and worse reasons given me for the ascendancy this man has acquired over the Maharajah; but I prefer to attribute it to the least unworthy one, of the Maharajah's utter disregard for the future of the Raj, which he expects will at any rate last his remaining lifetime. *Apres mois le deluge* is unfortunately his motto.

	Paras.
Reports for	
1884-85, Magistrate's	5
1885-86 Assistant Political Agent's	41
1886-87 Ditto Ditto	58

12. *The Jubraj.* - - As pointed out above, it is not for want of good advice that the State has come to occupy the humiliating position it does, nor are good men wanting in the State to guide it in the path of honour and prosperity. Among the Maharajah's sons, the Jubraj, the heir apparent, in spite of the cruelty with which he has been systematically deprived (as is clear from the Assistant Political Agent's Remarks) of the advantages of a liberal education and of travel, has displayed shrewdness, highmindedness and acute appreciation of the characters of all connected with the State in a most extraordinary manner. He is about 34 years of age, self-educated, reliant, and active mentally and physically; being a great reader and a keen sportsman. But for some reasons which I would rather not discuss here, he possesses not an atom of influence or power or responsibility. He is allowed to take no active interest in the administration of the State, which he may be called upon tomorrow to govern, as its absolute and unfettered ruler.

Reports for	paras.
1880-81, Assistant Political Agent's	50
1881-82, Ditto ditto	74
1882-83, Resolution	14
1883-84, Ditto	13
1883-84, Assistant Political Agent's	89
1884-85, Ditto ditto	89
1884-85, Magistrate's	4
1884-85, Resolution	15
1885-86, Assistant Political Agent's	98
1885-86, Resolution	8
1886-87, Assistant Political Agent's	106

13. *The Baro Thakur* - The Baro Thakur or prospective heir, who would succeed to the dignity of Jubraj on the latter ascending the Guddee, is fairly educated, intelligent, shrewd, and has traveled to some extent. Though 24 years' old, possessed of business capacity, and his father's admittedly favourite son, he too has

no voice in, or the smallest control over, the affairs of the Raj. It is strange, and by no means creditable to their father, that these two Princes, the future rulers of the State, should not have the power or influence for good or evil, that a ten - rupees Bengali darogah or mohurir in the employ of the State has. Among the Thakurs, or relations and connections of the Raj family, there are men quite capable enough, and beyond every other consideration honest, who could and would under proper guidance efficiently administer the affairs of their native country, and guard the welfare of the Raj, which is insuperably bound up with their own prosperity or ruin. They may not be as clever as the Bengali officials; but on the other hand, they are not so unreliable, and they could not drain the wealth of the country by diverting it out of the State; nor could they escape retribution as the Bengalis can do, whenever their malpractices are discovered. The State does not require burning and shining lights for its administration. It is too small, too poor, too insignificant, and too easily governed to require any, but the respectable, responsible, and native element that is to be found among the Thakurs, who can neither serve nor beg elsewhere, and must stand by or fall with the Raj. Some of these Thakurs are now employed in public offices, but (with one exception, the late Minister, now Sessions Judge) without any pay or remuneration, except the maintenance allowance they are entiled to, in any case, as Thakurs. They are, however, ridden rough -shod over by the all - absorbing, all-grasping, over - paid Bengali officials, who grudge them any power, or reasonable emoluments. The Thakurs can do no more than make a hurried and distant obeisance to the present Maharajah, and never get a hearing; while the Bengalis, through the Secretary, have always the ruler's ear. The consequence is that former are reduced to mere nonentities, so far as the wise and profitable governance of the State is concerned. As their numbers and, discontent increase, so do the expense and danger to the State, and instead of being pillars of strength to the Government, they may yet be forced by circumstance to become thorns in the side of the incapable and Bengali - ridden ruler.

14. Not many years ago, only just before the appointment of a Political Agent at Agartola, a band of Kukis would have been invited to rid the State of these obnoxious Bengalis, and perhaps their master too. But times have changed, and the intervention and strong hand of the paramount power have put an end to all this.

14. (a) The present Minister seems to have a special grudge against the Thakurs and hillman of the Raj. He employs a large portion of his supposed intelligence, activity, and cleverness in raking up insignificant amounts, relating to years long gone by, against these unfortunate people, and producing a formidable list of debts due to the State, with 25 or 30 years' interest superadded, he desires the Maharajah's instructions. The Maharajah, to avoid the trouble of enquiring, apathetically allows his people to be harassed for the recovery of these sums, insignificant in themselves, but formidable to those who are said to owe them, and which had really been given as rewards or charity; while the Bengalis devour lakhs annually, unquestioned and secure without the smallest profit or pleasure accruing to the State, its people, or its ruler. I am merely relating an incident described in one of the diaries of the Assistant Political Agent. This wholesale absorption of all the State funds by its Bengali servants has brought humiliation, dishonour and discredit on the Raj in three noticeable directions : - viz, first, purveyors of provisions, petty tradesmen, sepoys, and menial servants are unpaid for years; secondly, members of the Raj family, such as the widows of the late Rajah, the present Maharajah's own brothers and other near relations, old men, women and children, widows and orphans wholly dependent for the necessaries of life on their allowances, are reduced, through the greed or vindictiveness, or both combined, of the Bengali officials, to the utmost straits; being often constrained to sell or pawn their trinkets and domestic utensils, and sometimes even obliged to beg enough

Absorption of power by Bengalis.

Poverty of Thakur's.

Debt

to purchase a meal from a charitable neighbour or softhearted tradesman. The smallest encouragement from me would lead to my being inundated with petitions and complaints from these miserable creatures; and thirdly, the bonded debts, due to the mahajuns or money - lenders of Comillah, who have lent the State money from time to time to enable it to pay the Government revenue and casses of the zemindaries; about seven lakhs on bonds specially executed by the Maharajah himself, who consequently knew each time he was affixing his signature that he was adding a fresh debt to the liabilities of the State. The condition of things is so discreditable in the chukla that petty dealers and shopkeepers will not sell anything to the Rajbari except for cash payment. The restrictions imposed by the law upon creditors, who would like to sue the Maharajah for what he owes them, have placed them entirely at his mercy. Otherwise the greater portion of his zemindaries would have been sold long ago in execution of decrees. The interest on the bonded debts amounts to about Rs. 70,000 per annum, only the half of which sum, however, is paid in the manner described below; the other half being allowed to accumulate, and being added to the capital every three years, when the bonds are renewed. The mahajuns who are asked to lend a few days before the last day for payment of the Government revenue, when they are complete masters of the situation, demand and get a farm (ijara) on very favourable terms; about 33 percent, being allowed for collection expenses. Of the ijara jumma or Farmer's rent they actually pay 9 annas, and retain 7 annas in the rupee on account of the interest on the money they have lent. The mahajuns thus get double profits, and the Raj sinks deeper into debt, which never diminishes, but ever increases. I will here give one instance of how a mahajun's debt increases by leaps and bounds. From time to time a certain individual lent Rs. 25,000 at six percent. interest. The last time the bond was renewed about three years ago, it was for Rs. 49,000 interest - bearing capital. Another bond for Rs. 20,000, but without interest (as the Manager refused to include the interest due in the interest - bearing bond) was also executed. The creditor is now owed nearly Rs. 80,000, to which sum the Rs. 25,000 he originally lent has increased. In another case a mahajun, originally a peon on Rs. 5 a month, is now a creditor for over Rs. 70,000, besides being a large ijaradar or farmer. The entire sum of seven lakhs is due to men who either themselves or their fathers were once menial servants of the Raj.

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15. It is stated that this large debt has been incurred in paying the expenses of suits instituted by claimants of the Raj against the present Maharajah. This assertion imposes far too great a tax on human credulity, and must be rejected for the following reason. The late Rajah died, leaving three lakhs in his treasury. If more than this large sum was required for legal expenses, how was it that the claimants, the Maharaja's brothers and nephews, who were dependant on the Raj for their very subsistence, and who had no private means of their own consideration, and who, besides, could scarcely borrow, for the simple reason that no one considering their position would trust them, were able to carry on litigation that is said to have cost the Maharajah 10 lakhs! Another cause assigned for this debt is the marriage expenses of the Maharajah's children. They were all married in two batches, and the expenses were thus reduced to a minimum. As a matter of fact they did not exceed one lakh. To counterbalance this lakh, a firm of tea planters in Sylhet paid a bonus of a lakh. It should be noted that the present Maharajah's brother, the late Rajah, who ruled about 12 years, paid off a State debt amounting to 13 lakhs, and yet left three lakhs in the treasury, when he died in 1862. We do not know his annual income; but from the Political Agent's report for 1872, we see that the revenue of Hill Tipperah was about Rs. 1,45,000.

Cause of debt.

Revenue.

16. From the reports for the under - noted years, we get the annual revenue for -

	Rs.
1878-79	1,45,134
1879-80	2,01,106
1880-81	2,32,677
1881-82	2,29,961
1883-84	2,38,724
1884-85	2,43,884
1885-86	2,89,910
1886-87	3,37,352
Total	23,90,368

The income from the zemindaries during the last 20 years, from 1867 to 1887, has always been over five lakhs a year. It was a good deal less in the late Rajah's time, owing to ijaras or farms for long terms; most probably it was not more than four lakhs a year. So that the late Rajah, with a total income of about five and -a-half lakhs, saved over one lakh a year. It is therefore fair to assume that the present Maharajah could also have saved a lakh every year from 1862 (allowing no increase between the Rs. 1,45,000 of 1872 and Rs. 1,95,000 of 1877) -

				Rs.
1.	-	Or, say, from 1862 to 1876, 15 years, at 1 lakh	=	15 lakhs,
2.	-	,, ,, ,, 1877 to 1887, 11 years, at 1 lakh	=	11 lakhs
3.	-	Increase of Hill Tipperah revenue during the last 11 years from 1877 to 1887 less the old income of Rs. 1,45,000 a year, or 24 lakhs less 16 lakhs	=	8 lakhs
4.	-	Increase in zemindari income for, say, 20 years, at 1 lakh	=	20 lakhs
		A sum total of		54 lakhs

This amount undoubtedly could have been saved by the present Maharajah in addition to the three lakhs left by the late Rajah. Therefore 57 lakhs, plus 7 lakhs debt, plus 1 lakh bonus = 65 lakhs, were spent, or are said to have been spent, in litigation with people who were almost beggars, and in the expenses of two sets of marriages. I decline to accord my belief in the reality of such a state of things. Under all the circumstances of his position, the Maharajah, I venture to say, could easily have saved on an average, making due allowance for all his extra expenses, at least I lakh a year during the 26 years of his rule; and he should have 30 lakhs in his treasury at this moment. But acting under the advice of his Bengali counsellors, he owes for his food and his clothing; his servants' wages are hopelessly in arrear; and his borrowed debts continue unliquidated; his liabilities cannot be much, if at all, under 10 lakhs. It may therefore be safely assumed that neither the Maharajah nor his Bengali advisers are competent to relieve the State from the burden of debt, of which they cannot even pay the interest.

Report for 1884-85

Assistant Political Agent's paragraph		43
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17. Having thus shown that the entire administration has been for many years past systematically bad, dragging the Raj down to lower and lower depths of degradation and impecuniosity, I would now most respectfully, yet earnestly, beg His Honour to consider whether the time has not fully arrived, when the direct interference of Government, so often threatened, has become an absolute duty which the paramount power owes to the Raj, its people, and future rulers. The disgraceful "water" or caste agitation, which was originated by the clique referred to above so as a means of getting all power into their hands, and plundering the State, and the carelessness or connivance or both, which allowed the commission of the

Proposals.

barbarous rite of sati (of which four cases have been lately reported by the Assistant Political Agent, and for which a separate report will be shortly submitted), attest the unwisdom and incapacity of the present ruler, and the dishonesty and rapacity of his present advisers. No good can be expected from any of them. I have therefore deemed it right, after long and careful consideration of all the circumstances, to submit the following proposals for the favourable consideration of His Honour.

18. Before appointing an administrator for Hill Tipperah and a Manager under the Collector of Tipperah for the zemindaries in British territory, both officials being directly subordinate and responsible to Government, and quite independent of the Maharajah, who with others of the Raj family and Thakurs would get monthly allowances suitable to their rank and requirements, I would suggest the following arrangement as the mildest from of interference possible :-

Regency

(a) *Jubaraj Regent* - The Jubaraj to be appointed Regent, and to have a Minister for Hill Tipperah, and a Manager for the zemindaries under his orders.

(b) *Minister* - An able Deputy Magistrate (a Hindoo of Central or Western Bengal, totally unconnected with Eastern Bengal, especially Dacca) should be appointed Minister of Hill Tipperah on the present Minister's pay (Rs. 1,000), including contribution towards pension. He should have all the powers vested by the Maharajah in the present Minister regarding Hill Tipperah, and he should be directly responsible to the Regent.

(c) *Manager* - The appointment of the Manager should be revived, and given to a European, who should have the same powers in the zemindaries as those which the Minister would posses in Hill Tipperah. The post might be offered, of course only with the entire concurrence of the Regent, to the late Manager, than whom there is no one better acquainted with the details of the management of Chakla Roshnabad.

(d) The revenue of Hill Tipperah should be devoted to the payment of all expenses connected therewith, and those of the Raj family and Thakurs.

State expenses

(e) The surplus income of the zemindaries, after paying Government revenue, cesses, and collection expenses, should be appropriated towards the liquidation of the bonded and other debts due in British territory.

Liquidation of debts

(f) The Maharaja should receive a suitable allowance, but he should have no authority whatever in respect either of Hill Tipperah or the zemindaries. All such authority during the present Maharajah's lifetime should be vested in the Jubaraj as Regent.

Maharajah's pension and position.

19. The Assistant Political Agent has sustained the good reputation that he has earned in previous year, and has shown himself intimately acquainted with everything connected with the State.

No, 305, dated Agartala, the 20th June 1888.
From - Baboo Uma Kanta Das, Assistant Agent, Hill Tipperah,
To - The Majistrate and ex-officio Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,

I have the honor to submit the General Administration Report of the Hill Tipper Political Agency for the year 1887-88.

GENERAL REMARKS.

2.The year was a remarkably uneventful one, so far as the people were concerned. The crops were generally sufficient, and in some cases, as in those of cotton and till (oil-seed), very plentiful. The public health was on the whole good. The market prices of the various articles of food were comparatively moderate. Altogether the year was a very prosperous one, the like of which the people have not seen in the last decade.

3. The general prosperity of the year conduced in some measure to improve the embarrassed condition of the State. The collection of revenue was good, being about 16.4 percent. in excess of that of the previous year. The general administration, however, did not, as it was expected that it would, show any marked improvement in any direction. No noticeable reform was effected in any branch. The main debts of the State continued unabated. Officers and purveyors, though paid more than before, remained yet in considerable arrears. Pressing wants of schools, dispensaries, and other public institutions continued unsupplied. In one respect, however, endeavour was made to remove a great want. Steps were adopted to make some roads in the interior. The construction of such roads, each about five miles long, was taken in hand. One of them, which is nearly finished, has cost over Rs. 2,000.

4. In so peaceful and prosperous a year much could be effected to improve the administration, and to open and develop the resources of the State; but the way in which work is done at Agartala is not very promising. The Minister whose appointment was reported last year, is intelligent, active, and clever. He is also acquainted with the affairs of the State. But though on other respects sufficiently strong, he lacks in firmness in his dealings with the Maharajah - a defect which renders him unable to carry out measures of real reform. He is vested with sufficient powers of administration, but the full and free exercise of these powers by him depends, it seems, more upon the Maharajah's choice than upon his. In a state of things of this kind, the usefulness of his appointment can be only limited.

5. In His Highness' zemindaries also, collection of rent was better than before. Government revenue was paid without difficulty, though not the cesses, which often fell in arrears. Mr. E.F. Sandys was employed as Manager of the zemindaries about three years ago, but he was not given real powers of work before the present Minister's appointment in November 1886. In March last, however, the Maharajah became dissatisfied with some of his proceedings, and directed his removal from service. It is not known yet that His Highness intents to appoint a new Manager soon. But he has permitted the Minister to visit the zemindaries in order that he may enquire about their condition and submit proposals for their future management.

TOURS

6. I was out on tour for 92 days, and visited all the sub-divisional stations and nearly all the police thanas and guard - posts, and also all the jails, dispensaries and other public institutions of the State. There was no change for the better noticed in their condition in any respect. Everywhere work was done as before under

inconveniences arising from financial pressure. I visited also several hill villages occupied by Kukis, Reangs, and other tribes. The Sub-divisional Officers of the State also made sufficiently long tours of inspection in their respective jurisdictions.

WEATHER AND CROPS

7. As will be seen from the subjoined statement, the rainfall measured in the agency during the year was 65.02 inches against 87.56 inches of the previous year and 75.63 inches, the average of the preceding three years. -

Months	Average fall of 1883-84, 1884-85 and 1885-86	Total fall in 1886-87	Total fall in 1887-88
April	6.06	5.97	4.87
May	10.83	12.38	8.26
June	18.17	8.21	13.26
July	11.10	16.89	8.16
August	8.18	21.90	11.84
September	9.88	10.66	4.54
October	4.50	2.35	3.05
November	0.78	...	1.14
December	1.51	...	...
January	....	1.63	1.40
February	1.34	....	1.50
March	2.78	7.57	7.00
Total	75.63	87.66	65.02

8. Rainfall is not measured in any other part of the State. The figures mentioned above are not therefore sufficient for a correct indication of the general state of the weather of the country. The year was a favourable one both to crops and to public health. As to the former, rice, the staple produce of the State, was generally sufficient, and so also were chillies, sugarcane, and tobacoo; while cotton and till (oil-seeds), which as articles of trade, are the most valuable of the agricultural produce of the hills, were excellent both in quantity and quality. Their yield, it is said, was never so good in any year during the past quarter of a century.

9. Early in winter cholera broke out in the plains of Koylashar, and caused some loss of life. Later on in the season a few deaths from the same occurred in Agartala and its neighbourhood. Otherwise the year was a healthy one. In the hills the public health was good throughout, no outbreak of any disease having taken place in any part.

10. These favourable circumstances of the year did not, however, materially improve the condition of the masses, who are as poor and helpless now as ever. In the Sonamura Division the hill people are in a state of almost chronic poverty, being largely in debt to Bengali tradesmen. In the other parts of the hills also the inhabitants are not better off. They have no habit of thrift; but they posses the remarkable trait of being able to quietly put up with any inconvenience. This trait, which appears to be the offspring of sloth and general ignorance, is a great drawback to their advancement. As their profession is agriculture, and as there are plenty

of culturable lands in the country, they might considerably improve their condition, notwithstanding any other hinderances.

11. Of the other hinderances alluded to above, the mode of cultivation pursued in the hills and the dread of Lushais are the principal. The former renders the soil incapable of yeilding any crop after three or four years' continuous cultivation, and thus compels the people to move in search of fresh fields, making them thereby unsettled in their habitation. This unhappy result is also produced by the fear of Lushais, which universally prevails in the hills. This fear, however, is now considerably reduced owing to the absence of any raid during the past 17 years or so. Being induced by this prolonged absence of raid, and being naturally intelligent and courageous, the Jamatiyas have begun to make settled villages and to carry on cultivation by means of plough, for which purpose they are getting themselves provided with cattle and the necessary implements. This is a change for the better, which deserves to be encouraged.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE.

12. In Dharmanagar some new settlers came from Sylhet. And from the country watered by the Feni, a number of Reangs went across the river to settle in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, in order to evade payment of the State dues. These movements, besides which none worth being mentioned took place during the year, did not much affect the total number of the population of the country.

13. The administration has not yet suggested any rule for preventing emigration. As mentioned in paragraph 31 of my last annual report, the object may be attained, if the debts which these migratory people owe to one State are made recoverable in the jurisdiction of the other.

14. The abolition of the rule under which British subjects could not acquire occupancy rights in the State, and the passing of the Act relating to landlord and tenants, as mentioned in the last year's report, have not yet been followed by any increase of population in the country. The fact is there is no great want of arable lands in the border districts, from which therefore no large number of immigrants is likely to come in, unless special inducements are offered.

15. *Prices of food-grains and labour* - The following is a comparative statements of the prices of the principal food-grains and labour which were current in Agartala in the past few years :-

FOOD GRAINS.	Average price of 1883-84, 1884-85 and 1885-86			Price in 1886-87			Price in 1887-88		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice (best sort)	2	14	0	3	6	0	3	2	0
Rice (common)	2	4	0	2	8	0	2	2	0
Wheat	3	6	0	3	5	0	3	10	0
Gram	2	12	0	3	5	0	3	4	0
Salt	3	10	0	3	10	0	3	12	0
Labour									
Skilled :-									
Mason	13	12	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Smith	13	12	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Carpenter	13	12	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Unskilled :-									
Agriculturist	7	8	0	8	0	0	8	0	0
Day labourers	6	2	0	6	0	0	6	0	0

16. It will be seen that during the year the price of rice was reduced. This was owing to the better yeild of the crop. The slight rise in the price of salt is ascribed to the increased rate at which duty is now levied on the article, the consumption of which, however, does not seem to have been affected by it. The rest of the items do not call for any special remark.

17. Labour, both skilled and unskilled, is obtained from British territory. Hence its price is always high. Local labour is seldom procurable for any work otherwise than under orders of the administration. The inhabitants of the soil do not care for wages.

MINES, MANUFACTURE, AND FORESTS.

18. Coal mines have been discovered in more than one part of the State. For want of means, however, they have not yet been worked. Some of the cotton manufactures of the country, such as poeris (rugs), phaniaks (wearing apparel), are very interesting. But no trade worth the name is carried on in any of them, or in any other articles except dug-outs or canoes which are largely in use in Tipperah and Noakholly.

19. The reserved sal forests of the Sonamura Division have not yet been worked. Some rules have recently been made for their management. But they have not been brought under operation. It is the habit of the people of the adjacent villages in British territory to frequently enter into these forest and commit theft of timber. During the year under report several of such offenders were arrested and brought to justice - a circumstance which, it is hoped, will go a good way to check the lawless practice.

TRADE AND COMMERCE

20. The country is not renowned for its commerce. Being most thinly populated, and the wants of the people being simple and few, the State has no import trade of any great value. The chief articles of this trade are chillies, tobacco, salt, piece-goods, pottery, and dried fish. They are brought in by Bengali tradesmen of the

adjacent districts, and are sold either for cash or for cotton.

21. The principal exports are timber, bamboo, thatching grass, and other kinds of forest produce as well as cotton and oil-seeds. These are largely taken out both by water and by land. There are no statistics to rely upon; but from the amount of the export duties realised, it is calculated, as was done formerly, that the total value of the export trade of the year was in round figures about Rs. 7,82,000, against Rs. 6,25,000 of the previous year and Rs. 6,03,000, the average of the preceding three years. Of this amount, Rs. 3,30,000 is the estimated value of the forest produce removed from the State, Rs. 25,000 is that of the elephants caught and sold, and the balance of Rs. 4,27,000 is that of the cotton and oil-seeds exported. The increase in the value of the export trade, particularly in that of the trade in cotton and oil-seeds, is an evidence of improvement in the condition of the hill people, who are the chief growers or collectors of the articles exported.

22. The chief seats of trade, viz, bazars and shops, are all along the banks of the principal rivers, and also at places where there are sub-divisional stations, police thannas, and cotton offices. Imports of various kinds, such as license fees, permits, khotagaris, and export duties under numerous heads, are levied by the State. They are realized from the tradesmen; but they cause no small amount of hardship to the people with whom the tradesmen deal, and upon whom the burden in each case eventually falls. The duty on cotton was the same as before, viz, on the average Rs. 2 a maund, the market price of which varied from Rs. 4 to Rs. 5.. The duty therefore was more than 40 percent *ad valorem* - an oppressively high rate. In the case of Kukis and others, on whose cotton no duty is levied in cash, a fourth part of the produce not required for their own consumption is taken by the State as its dues. The tax should similarly be reduced to 25 percent *ad valorem* all round.

PUBLIC FEELING

23. For some time the Minister and the Manager of the zemindaries worked friendly with one another. But subsequently there was observed a want of good understanding between them, a matter which formed for a period the subject of general topic both at Comillah and at Agartala. The matter also appeared in the Press. No other event of the year engaged the attention of the public. There was no agitation about the water-question mentioned in previous years. Some debts formerly incurred for the furtherance of that movement has recently been paid up.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

24. No noticeable reforms have taken place under this head. Indeed, so far as the State is directly concerned, there has been no change in the administration worth being mentioned. The Secretary's office,which, as reported in previous years, is a sinecure and may be, obstructive to the Minister, still continues to exist in its full force, costing the State about Rs. 5,000 a year. The administration of justice at Agartala still rests with the inadequately remunerated and irregularly paid or honorary officers of the Thakur families, over whom the Minister's direct authority is limited. In the matter of collection of revenue, some new arrangements have been made as mentioned below; but in respect of expenditure there is apparently as much want of check now as ever. In fact, in this and in other matters the general administration of the Raj continues much in the same state as was described by Mr. C. W. Botton, c.s. Political Agent, in paragraphs 8 to 11 of his annual report for the year 1877-78.

25. The change in the hand of the officer in charge of His Highness' English office, reported last year, has not yet produced the result that was expected from it. Delay in getting work done by that office, which has

always been a subject of complaint, continues still to occur as before. This, however, is due to the state of the machinery with which the officer works, and not to the officer himself, who is an active and clever person of much promise. The machinery alluded to is the working agency employed in the interior, which is far from being in a state of efficiency, but over which the officer in question, Baboo Banga Chandra Bhattacharjea, B.A. has no direct control.

26. The officer named above has been relieved of the charge of the Account Department, which is now entrusted to his predecessor in the English office — Baboo Har Charan Nandi, Dewan, who is a Government servant lent to the State, and in whom His Highness is said to have much confidence. There is another officer of Government in the service of the State, viz, Baboo Durga Prosad Gupta, Dewan, who, however, has applied for pension, and is about to retire.

27. As regards the Maharajah's zemindaries, there have been several changes during the year, both in the staff of the officers employed and in the manner in which work is done. In regard to the former, some of the steps taken were not actually necessary and not judicious. They were therefore not upheld by His Highness. The Manager himself had obtained increased pay and additional powers, but he was not able to enjoy them long. As to the manner of work, the introduction by Mr. E. F. Sandays of certain cheque forms in the Account Department was an improvement on the former state of things.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

28. The system of revenue administration followed in the State, under which most of the chief sources of revenue are let out in farm instead of being held under direct management, seems to be wrong in principle. It may save some of the cost and trouble incident to Khas management, but expose the subjects to the caprice of the farmers, and gives the latter opportunities to defraud the State.

29. Another objectionable feature in the revenue system in vogue in the country is the imposition of numerous petty taxes at inordinately high rates, which are often determined by the farmers themselves. These taxes are chiefly the duties levied on different kinds of forest produce removed by land routes. For a bundle of bamboos worth from four to six pice, nearly an equal amount is charged as the export duty, and for a small bamboo mat valued at a couple of pice or so, one pice is charged as the market tax, if it is disposed of in a market, and one pice as the export duty. I have suggested to the administration the advisability of revising these rates, which ought not to be higher than 25 percent. *ad valorem.*

30. The Minister has not yet been able to rectify abuses like those mentioned above, his energy and attention being for the present chiefly devoted to the better realization of revenue under all unobjectionable heads. In this his labour has been successful. He has wisely put a stop to the harmful Barat system alluded to in the annual report, and has directed all tehsil officers to remit to the Sudder treasury the whole of their income, except in the cases of Sub-divisional Officers, such portions as may be necessary to meet the fixed local charges. Owing to these arrangements some of the old chests of the treasury were, after a long period, once more found refilled. But the chests soon became again empty. It is believed that most of the money was spent on His Highness's household and private affairs, and a portion only on affairs of the State.

31. As usual the administration has furnished and account of receipts, but none of expenditure. The receipts, as will be seen, from the annexed statement No. 1, amounted to Rs. 3,37,352, against Rs. 2,89,910 of the previous year, and Rs. 2,38,805, the average of the preceding three years, showing a total increase of Rs.

74,782 under ten heads, against a total decrese of Rs. 27,340 under ten other heads, and giving thus on the whole a net increase of Rs. 47,442. This satisfactory result was due to the careful supervision kept over the collection work, and to the favourable yield of the cotton and till crops, which alone gave Rs. 1,28,188 against Rs. 69,259 of the previous year. Compared with what it was in 1872, the income of the State is now a great deal more than doubled. In that year Mr. A.W. B Power found the collection to be only Rs. 1,45,000 in round figures.

32. It is, however, not enough if collection only is improved. Expenditure also is required to be reasonably checked. The financial position of the State cannot be properly judged without and account of its expenses and liabilities. But it seems clear that equilibrium has not yet been established between income and expenditure. Some of the floting debts bearing high rates of interest were paid up as was done in the previous year. But the current demand, on the other hand, fell largely in arrears, while the main debts of the State, viz, those incurred on bonds in Comillah, remained undiminished. The interest on these chief debts amounts to over Rs. 60,000 a year. It was suggested in the last annual report that this yearly charge might be got considerably reduced. With a view to effect such reduction, the Minister has now entered into negotiations with the creditors of the State.

33. The decrease of Rs. 27,340, noted above, was chiefly due to the unsuccessful Khedda operations of the year owing to want of proper management on the part of the farmers, by whom only 45 elephants were caught against 117 of the previous year. The royalty due to the State therefore fell from Rs. 18,250 to Rs. 7,508. There was also a remarkable fall under the head of Forest produce floated down the Feni, which is principally ascribed to destruction of thatching grass by high flood and to prevalence of cholera in the working season amongst the people of the adjoining districts, by whom forest produce is exported. The river rules of Sylhet, under which the products of the Tipperah Hills are taxed in that district, have tended to reduce the value of some of His Highness' forest mehals. Land revenue, which also shows some decrease, is collected through farmers and talukdars, most of whom are relations of or dependants on, the Maharajah, and can therefore defer with impunity the paymant of their debts to the State. The decrease under the head of "Law and Justice - Fines" is attributed to decrease in the number of criminal cases as mentioned below.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

34. The administration of justice in Hill Tipperah was described by Mr. Power in 1872 as "being a system of equity and good conscience qualified by a few enactments, the only value of which was to limit penalties in criminal cases. There was no procedure, and no supervision by the higher courts over the lower." This description still holds good in the main, except in respect of procedure and supervision, in both of which there has since been marked improvement. The procedure followed in the courts of the country is now virtually the same as that of the courts in British territory. While in regard to supervision the Jubraj is doing a great deal in his capacity as the Chief Judge of the Khas Appellate Court. But the majority of the officers administering justice, and also the police, are very much under-paid, and are kept largely in arrears. Unless these defects are removed, the courts of the State cannot be expected to command the full confidence of the people. No re-organization of the police establishments was made during the year, as was expected from the publication of the Police Act mentioned in the last annual report.

35. The number of courts and that of police thanas continued the same as before, viz, 8 and 18 respectively. The statement No. 2 annexed to this report gives all available information ragarding the criminal cases which

occurred during the year. It will be seen therefrom that the total number of such cases, inclusive of those pending from the previous year, was 598, viz 283 cognizable and 315 non-cognizable cases. The total number of persons brought to trial was 792, of whom 429, or 61.4 percent. of the number tried, were convicted. In respect of this result there were 79 cases of appeal. In 35 of them the sentences of the lower court were wholly or partly upheld, and in 34 they were reversed, while in 5 cases further enquiry was directed, and the rest were either rejected or not disposed of. In 12 cases the appeal was carried to the Khas Appellate Court, where in 6 of them the sentences were confirmed or modified, and in 3 they were reversed. Of the remaining 3 cases, 1 was remanded and 2 were rejected. The last-mentioned court which, as said before, is presided over by the Jubraj, showed much zeal in the discharge of its duties. In two of three cases concerning British subjects, it upheld with praiseworthy boldness the cause of justice, differing from the views of the Chief Executive.

36. Compared with the figure returned last year, the number of cases (original) shows a slight decrease. This is believed to be due to the suggestion referred to in paragraph 84 of the last annual report, that the people should not be encouraged to resort to criminal courts unnecessarily. Most of the cases reported occurred in the plains amongst Bengalis, whose total number in round figure is about 37,000 only, In the hills crime was very light as usual.

37. The annexed statement No. 3 shows that British subjects were concerned in 198 cases, or in 33.1 percent of the entire number that occurred. Altogether 213 persons were brought to trial of whom 3 escaped, 24 remained under trial at the close of the year, and the rest, i.e, 186, were tried, 117 or 62.9 percent, being convicted, and 69, or 37.1 percent., being acquitted or discharged. Of these persons, 4 only were brought under the warrant of the Political Agent, the rest being arrested in the State. British subjects were also concerned in 7 other cases, which being found fit to be tried in British territory, were certified for the purpose by the Political Agent.

38. Owing to the working of the new Landlord and Tenant Act of the State, there was a considerable increase in the number of civil suits, which as will be seen from the statement No. 4 herewith submitted rose to 523 from 322 of the previous year. In 166 of these suits British subjects were concerned, viz, in 109 as plaintiffs, and in 17 as defendants, while in 40 both the parties were British subjects.

JAILS.

39. The annexed statement No. 5 shows that in the four jails or lock-ups of the State there were 50 prisoners at the close of the year. All of them were leniently treated. During the year two prisoners were released - one on the occasion of a son being born to His Highness the Maharajah, and the other when the annaprasan (rice administering) caremony of the child was performed. The Jubraj, who takes much interest in the management of the jail, prescribed certain forms of register for the use of the Jail office, and also suggested certain rules to ensure superior and systematic medical attendance upon the prisoners. These have been adopted by the administration.

40. Besides the public jail, there are in Agartala one or two places called Alangs, where the hill peons have their quarters, and where occasionally persons are kept in detention under orders of authorities other courts of justice. The practice under which people are thus allowed to be confined outside the established jail is objectionable, as it can lead to abuses. A special report on the subject will be submitted.

MILITARY AND FRONTIER MATTERS

41. It will be seen from the accompanying statement No. 6 that the force of the State was composed of 263 men, rank and file. The best portion of it was employed in the frontier posts, the number of which was six as reported last year. The remainder of the force was useful only for purposes of court display. The men were kept more or less in arrears of pay. The administration was unable to enlist the full complement of 70 Gurkhas required under Government orders, the present number being only 59. But a supply of ammunition was obtained under a license of Government to replenish the magazine of the State. The frontier was perfectly peaceful throughout the year.

42. There is a proposal for communication being established between the guards maintained by the administration in the Koylashar Division and the frontier posts of Sylhet, and for the force of the State being reduced, if so desired by His Highness, in order that the portion retained might be kept in a state of efficiency. The matter is now before the Maharajah.

EDUCATION

43. The number of schools and patshalas remained the same as before, viz. 16, but that of students fell from 424 to 393. For financial difficulties the administration was unable to take any new step towards the spread of education in the country.

44. The Jubraj visited the Agartala school, in which he takes a personal interest, and offered certain prizes to the students. His own education is a matter to which the attention of the Maharajah was drawn in the resolution of Government on the former reports of the Agency. Jubraj Radha Kishor Deb Barma is intelligent, gentle, and courteous. He has a good heart and a very amiable disposition. During the year he showed by action an earnest desire to have reforms introduced in the administration of the State. He is now of about 30 years of age, but has not seen any place outside the limits of Agartala, except Comillah. It is most desirable that he should be allowed the advantages of a visit to Calcutta.

45. Next in rank to the Jubraj is Bara Thakur Samaremdra Chandra Deb Barma, who is also intelligent, sharp, and of active habits. He has been much benefited by his travels in the North - Western Provinces, and particularly by his visit to Calcutta, which last he again visited during the year, accompained by the Minister. The younger children of the Maharajah are under the tuition of private teachers.

DISPENSARIES.

46. The number of charitable dispensaries was the same as before, viz four, one at the head-quarters station of each of the four sub-divisions of the State. The jails and the outlying military guard-posts of Dharmanagar and Kamalpore was supplied with needful medicines for their use. There was no regular arrangement anywhere for keeping in-door patients. The number of out-door patients who received medical aid was 5,369 against 4,423 of the previous year. The prevailing deseases were fever, skin-diseases, and bowel-complaints. The Agartala Dispensary also was visited by the Jubraj, who made a close and intelligent inspection of it. I was present when this and the other public institutions alluded to above were visited by him.

POST-OFFICE.

47. The Government post-office attached to the Agency worked very satisfactorily. The monetary

transactions carried on though it by the public were much increased by the discontinuance in the Maharajah's office of the Barat system, under which bills payable by that office were generally sent to the farmers and other collectors of revenue for payment. The amount of remittance made by the people through the post-office was Rs. 78,842 in money - orders and Rs. 9,855 in insured covers, against Rs. 54,474 and Rs. 15,299 respectively of the previous year; while the amount of money-orders paid by the office rose from Rs. 20,387 to Rs. 52,606.

COMMUNICATION.

48. As said before, two roads, each about five miles in length, were arranged to be made during the year, one across the spur of hills to the east of Chauddagram, and the other across the Unakuti hills to the east of Koylashar. The former, which is nearly finished, connects the Maharajah's zemindaries in Tipperah with those in Noakolly. The latter will join the two important valleys of Koylashar and Dharmanagar, and will, if kept open, lead to much improvement in the condition of His Highness' hill territory in that side. Several such roads are necessary for communication being carried on in the country with facility. Lahars or hill-paths were as usual cut by the people in some parts for their use. These are not, however, resorted to by the members of the administration, except hill peons.

MISCELLANEOUS

49. During the year iron posts were put up at all the places on the line of the boundary between Tipperah and Hill Tipperah where there are broken or ruined masonry pillars, which last have not been removed. The instruction of Government that the boundary between this state and British territory, which has already been duly settled and marked should not be questioned about without sufficient ground, was duly communicated to the Durbar, by which no new question has since been raised.

50. Some of the excise shops of the State having been found to be situated within a mile of the boundary of British territory were removed under the rules on the subject, or closed. Such shops are hardly required anywhere in the country close to the boundary, as the population along the border is very sparse, and consists chiefly of Bengali-Mahomedans, amongst whom liquor and other exciseable articles are not much in use.

51. In my movements in the Sonamura Division in March last, I heard that a case of sati had taken place there about a month previously. In the enquiry which I made on receipt of the information, I learnt that two other cases had occurred before. The matter has formed the subject of a correspondence with the administration, which says that sati is forbidden in the country. I have, however, advised it to issue a prohibitory proclamation again, as was done a few years ago in reference to domestic slavery which was formerly prevalent here. A special report on the subject will be submitted.

52. The head-clerk of the Agency, Baboo Gobind Chandra Das, well sustained his character for general efficiency and trustworthiness. He most carefully and diligently performed his duties throughout the year.

Statement showing the amount of revenue derived from all sources in 1887-88

Serial number.	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average receipts for the three years, 1883-84, 1884-85, and 1885-86	Receipts in whole rupees in 1886-87.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1887-88.	AS COMPARED WITH 1884-85.		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.	Land revenue from plain lands	36,692	40,656	38,266	...	2,390	
2.	Family tax in the hills	22,865	23,840	28,167	4,327	...	
3.	Tax on forest produce	54,436	89,520	80,712	...	8,808	
4.	Do. on the Fenny	11,271	10,356	7,700	...	2,656	
5.	Do on cotton and oil seeds	65,006	69,259	1,28,188	58,929	...	
6.	Royalty on elephants caught	17,119	18,250	7,508	...	10,742	
7.	Buffallo-grazing mehal	2,044	2,384	4,424	2,040	...	
8.	Khotagari mehal	2,323	3,231	3,808	637	...	
9.	Kazai (kazifee) mehal	401	272	377	105	...	
10.	Rents on markets	606	1,611	1,515	...	96	
11.	Law and justice - fines	3,886	4,221	2,992	...	1,229	
12.	Ditto Ditto stamp and court fee	8,675	9,708	8,761	...	947	
13.	Ditto ditto - process fees	1,094	2,558	3,067	509	...	
14.	Ditto ditto - cattle pounds	1,852	1,633	1,910	277	...	
15.	Ditto ditto - abkari (excise)	1,603	1,644	2,287	643	...	
16.	Thatching grass mehal*	...	...	6,783	6,783	...	
17.	Nazars	1,049	1,119	736	...	383	
18.	Adda (chowkidari-tax) mehal	3,490	4,377	4,291	...	86	
19.	Registration	1,914	2,102	2,099	...	3	
20.	Miscellaneous	2,479	3,169	3,701	532	...	
	Total	2,38,805	2,89,910	3,37,352	74,782	27,340	Increase on the whole Rs. 47,442

* Formerly the income from this source used to be shown under the head of "forest produce", No. 3

U. K. DAS,
Assistant Political Agent.

No. 2.

Statement of Criminal Cases, 1887-88.

DESCRIPTION OF OFFENCE		Cases pending from the previous year.	Cases instituted during the year	Total number of cases	CASES DISPOSED OF		Cases pending at the close of the year.	NUMBER OF PERSONS BROUGHT TO TRIAL, AND RESULTS OF TRIAL.						
					Rejected, compromised or dismissed without enquiry.	Tried.		Under trial at the close of the previous year	Brought to trial during the year	Total number under trial	Convicted.	Acquitted or discharged	Died, escaped, or transfered	Under trial at the close of the year.
Class I. - Offences Against the State, &c:, &c.,	Congnizable	2	14	16	1	10	5	...	54	54	37	5	...	12
	Non-cognizable	3	59	62	15	39	8	4	65	69	40	18	...	11
Class II - Serious offences against the person.	Cognizable	2	25	27	6	15	6	6	46	52	26	13	1	12
	Non-cognizable	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Class III - Serious offences against person and property	Cognizable	5	12	17	1	11	5	4	25	29	5	11	...	13
	Non-cognizable	...	6	6	5	1	...	...	2	2	...	2	...	...
Class IV - Minor offences against the person	Cognizable	1	9	10	2	4	4	2	13	15	6	2	...	7
	Non-cognizable	7	135	142	65	66	11	18	118	136	90	44	...	2
Class V - Minor offences against property	Cognizable	18	163	181	37	125	19	17	242	259	146	96	3	14
	Non-cognizable	4	74	78	40	34	4	...	67	67	30	35	...	2
Class VI - Other offences	Cognizable	2	30	32	6	21	5	...	71	71	30	32	...	9
	Non-cognizable	1	26	27	6	19	2	...	38	38	19	12	...	7
Total cognizable		30	253	283	53	186	44	29	451	480	250	159	4	67
Total Non-cognizable		15	300	315	131	159	25	22	290	312	179	111	...	22
GRAND TOTAL		45	553	598	184	345	69	51	741	792	429	270	4	89

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR 1888-89

No. 1249-XVI-38, dated Comillah, the 27th June 1889.
From - A. H. COLLINS, ESQ, Officiating Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent of Hill Tipperah.
To - The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith the report of the Assistant Political Agent on the General Administration of Hill Tipperah for the year 1888-89.

2. The report has been carefully written, and contains all the information required. Having joined the district at the latter end of March last, I have not gained sufficient experience of Hill Tipperah to be able to say much on the several subjects treated in the report.

3. That the Maharajah's affairs, both in Hill Tipperah and in the zemindaries, are not well managed are apparent. I am strongly of opinion that there should be a strong minister for the State and a manager for the zemindaries, the latter being subordinate to the former in important matters. I doubt if the Council now appointed by the Maharajah will ever succeed in introducing reforms likely to produce a satisfactory result.

4. During my short incumbency here, I have found it always difficult to obtain from the Durbar prompt information called for by higher authorities, which clearly indicates that the administration is not properly managed, and that an efficient administrator is absolutely necessary.

5. The Assistant Political Agent, Rai Umakanta Das Bahadoor, was invested with the title of Rai Bahadoor during the past year. He is thoroughly acquainted with all matters connected with hill Tipperah, and it is a matter of satisfaction that such a deserving officer has been conferred an honourary title.

6. I received the report on the 25th current, and in order to save time, I submit it in original.

No. 567, dated Agartala, the 24th June 1889.
From - The Assistant Political Agent of Hill tipperah,
To - The Officiating Magistrate of Tipperah and ex-officio Political Agent, Hill Tipperah.

I HAVE the honour to submit the Annual Report on the General Administration of Hill Tipperah for the year 1888-89.

2. The preceding year saw the overthrow of the manager of His Highness the Maharajah's zemindaries in British territory, Mr. E. F. Sandys. The year under report similarly witnessed the downfall of the minister Baboo Mohini Mohan Bardhan. The latter officer, indeed, had become unpopular and unsettled in his position from before the fate of the former was pronounced. But he held on as long as he could, until finding himself unable to continue any more, he left Agartala for good in November last. The Durbar for obvious reasons wanted him to come back, but finding that he was unwilling to return, dismissed him from service, and virtually abolished his post. There is now no responsible head officer either in the State or in the zemindaries.

3. For conducting his administration, the Maharajah has apponted a Council consisting of four members, three of whom are his officers and one a relation. Each of the members has got the charge of one or more departments, while the general control, supervision, and direction rest with His Highness himself. The Maharajah hopes that the arrangement will prove successful. How far this hope will be realized time will show. His Highness, who is so remarkable for intelligence, courtesy and goodness of heart, has not much reputation

for ruling capacity. One satisfactory feature of the arrangement, however, is that the two appointed successors of His Highness, viz., the Jubraj and the Bara thakur, have been given some share in the administration, though a small one. They have been authorised to see that the orders issued by the Maharajah are duly carried out. It is said that the object of His Highness here is more to let them have some practical training in respect of the duty, which, one day, they may be called upon to undertake, than to give them at present any power of direction or control. Both of them are intelligent, active and young, and both are willing to work. The Jubraj, who is the elder of the two, and who is the next heir to the gudde, has shown a laudable desire for getting reforms introduced into the administration. He is the presiding officer of the Chief Court of Justice, and has, in that capacity, done much to improve the condition of the subordinate courts and of the jails.

4. News of the Lushai raids of the last cold weather in the Chengree valley caused considerable alarm in several parts of the State, including Agartala, its capital. Disturbance of a somewhat general character occured in the Sonamura and the Bilania Divisions, where people, of the valley visited by the Lushais had come in large numbers to seek shelter. The residents, as is wont with them on such occasions, left their villages en masse and went to hide themselves in the forests. In the hurry and confusion which ensued, they suffered much. The administration did all that lay in its power to give reassurance to the inhabitants, and to restore order and confusion which ensued, they suffered much. The administration did all that lay in its power to give reassurance to the inhabitants, and to restore order and peace amongst them.

5. Besides the above, no event of any importance took place during the year. Recently His Highness has, in accordance with the advice given him in that behalf, prohibited by a duly promulgated, order, the practice of suttee mentioned in the last Annual Report.

TOURS.

6. Of the three sub-divisions of the State, I visited Sonamura twice, and each of the other two - Koylasher and Bilania - once. I visited also nearly all the police-stations, military outposts, schools, dispensaries and other public institutions, and also several villages both in the hills and in the plains of the State. In my movements I had opportunity to see a good portion of the Maharajah's zemindaries in Noakholly, Tipperah, and Sylhet. The present report is chiefly based on the information gathered in these tours, which, on the whole, occupied 85 days.

7. The Sub-divisional Officers of Sonamura and Bilania moved a great deal in their respective jurisdictions, especially during the period of unrest caused by the reports of the Lushai raids. Their presence amongst the people at the time helped much towards the restoration of peace, for which the Sub-divisional Officer of Sonamura made creditable exertions.

CROPS AND WEATHER

8. The state of the weather was tolerably good, but that of the crops was not quite so. The rainfall was sufficient, but not adequately distributed, as will be known from the following comparative statement :

Months	Average fall of 1884-85, 1885-86 and 1886-87	Total fall in 1887-88	Total fall in 1888-89
April	6.31	4.87	16.71
May	10.37	8.26	14.33
June	15. 94	13.26	10.80
July	12.51	8.16	8.99
August	12.10	11.84	14.02
September	10.14	4.54	6.88
October	4.35	3.05	...
November	.78	1.14	.45
December	...	...	...
January	.54	1.40	.42
February	.54	1.50	.52
March	4.23	7.00	...
Total	77.81	65.02	73.12

9. It will be seen from the above that during the last six months of the year there was almost no rain here, the total fall being 1.39 inches against 14.09 inches of the corresponding period of the previous year, and 10.44 inches, the average of the same period of the preceding three years. This unusual dryness of the weather was not, however, positively injurious to public health, though such a consequence was for a time most generally apprehended. It was, however, harmful to bora paddy, sugarcane, chillies, and oil-seeds, which suffered much for want of sufficient moisture in the ground.

10. Rats are great enemies to crops. In the hill of this State, especially in those of the Koylashar Division, they appeared this year in very lare numbers and made a havoc of the jooms, eating up almost every standing crop - paddy, cotton, oil-seeds, &c. In the plains of that Division, however, there was a bumper produce of paddy. In the other parts of the State the yield of cotton and paddy was about average, but that of sugarcane, chillies, and oil-seeds, below it. On the whole, therefore, the hill people did not fare well during the year, and their difficulties were increased by the disquietude that resulted from reports of the Lushai inroads.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE.

11. Emigration from here occurs very seldom. Internal movements of the people also take place only when joom lands have to be sought for in distant quarters. For this purpose, hill villages have often to change their sites. During the year, however, nothing worth being mentioned occurred under this head. The only noticeable movements of the people were those, which, as mentioned before, took place in consequence of the Lushai outrages in the Chengree valley. More than two thousand Chakmas and Reangs - inhabitants of the country about that valley - crossed the Fenny and came to this State, in which most of them have cut their jooms and built their sheds. It is not likely, however, that they will be permanent residents here.

PRICES OF FOOD GRAINS AND LABOUR.

12. There is no practice of buying or selling of food-grains amongst the hill-people. In time of necessity they

borrow from their more fortunate brothers or take alms. This last course was largely resorted to by the people of the Koylashar Division during the year. In the plains there was a general rise in the price of the imported food-grains. This was owing to increase of the rates that prevailed in the markets of the adjacent districts from which they were brought. The crop of rice of the superior kind was very insufficient,. which caused proportionate increase in the market value of the article. There was no noticeable change in the price of ordinary rice, and none in that of labour, as the following comparative table will show :

FOOD GRAINS.	Average of 1884-85, 1885-86, and 1886-87			Price in 1887-88			Price in 1888-89		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice (best sort)	3	4	0	3	2	0	4	2	0
Rice (common)	2	6	0	2	2	0	2	0	0
Wheat	3	4	0	3	10	0	5	8	0
Gram	2	14	0	3	4	0	3	8	0
Salt	3	10	0	3	12	0	4	4	0
Labour									
Skilled :-									
Mason	14	6	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Smith	14	6	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Carpenter	16	6	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Unskilled :-									
Agriculturist	7	10	0	8	0	0	8	0	0
Day labourers	6	2	0	6	0	0	6	0	0

MINES AND MANUFACTURES.

13. There is hardly anything to be said on this subject in addition to what has been mentioned in previous reports. The coal mines that have been discovered have not yet been brought under operation. The manufactures of the country are not many, and except a few cotton fabrics, such as rugs, bed-sheets, and wearing cloths of the natives, none are very interesting. There is no trade, in respect of any of them excepi dug-outs and bamboo mats. the work about the former, which is carried on in the Sima-Rima valley close to the borders of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, was much interrupted on account of the disturbed condition of the country.

TRADE.

14. Trade is not the profession of the natives who live chiefly by agriculture. The tradesmen of the country are all Bengalis, who export cotton, oil-seeds, and forest produce of various kinds, and import, except rice, all necessaries of life, such as salt, dried fish, pulses and also piece-goods, hardware, pottery and fancy things. The seats of the export trade lie chiefly on the banks of rivers where they leave the boundary of the State and pass into British territory. Import trade is principally carried on in bazars and shops which are mostly situated close to the border of the British districts. The Bazars are slowly improving both in number and condition.

15. Sale of the wild elephants which are caught in the hills is an important part of the trade of the country.

During the year under report, 80 elephants were captured for the purpose. But there were not many purchasers in the market.

16. The entire value of the export trade, of which a reasonable estimate can be formed from the amount of the export duties realized by the administration, was Rs. 6,41,000 against Rs. 7,82,000 of the previous year, which was an exceptionally good year for cotton. The average of the preceding three years was Rs. 6,17,000 only. The duties are of various kinds, and in some instances of extortionate character. The rate is hardly below 25 percent. ad valorem. In some cases, as in those of cotton and oil-seeds, it is 40 per cent. or more. These high rates induce smuggling which is carried on to a considerable extent.

17. Timber and bamboos removed from the Hill Tipperah forests and floated down in the district of Sylhet are under the Sylhet river rules, charged with pass-fees. This additional liability has made the forest produce cut in the Sylhet side of the State a rather dear commodity.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING.

18. There is no voice of the natives of the soil in any matter in the State. The Maharajah's word is law, and it is obeyed by all classes without any objection. That word, however, when it relates to matters of administration, is not usually pronounced before it is considered by His Highness' advisers. The proceedings of these advisers in connection therewith, as indeed all their proceedings are carried on most privately, the people being never taken into confidence. This leads to reports of several sorts being created and circulated much to the discredit of the Durbar.

19. The action taken by the Maharajah regarding the abolition of the minister's post is universally regarded as a most ill advised one. It has engaged the attention of the people, whose decided opinion is that the State cannot long go on without an energetic and conscientious minister, nor the zemindaries without a strong manager. This opinion no doubt, is based on reason. But the popular idea about the mal-administration which prevails here, and which is so general a topic of conversation amongst the natives in several places, is founded, it appears, on an unjust comparison of facts. The condition of the State is compared not with what it was before, - say 20 or 25 years back, but with the condition of the settled districts under British Government. The former comparison, if made, would prove as much favourable to the Administration as the latter is against it.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

20. Besides the abolition of the minister's post and the constitution in its stead of a Council as mention before, the only change of importance worth being reported was the appointment of a graduate in law to the charge of the important Sub-division of Sonamura, the services of the former incumbent having been previously dispensed with. The Administration is to be congratulated on this change, which shows that it now appreciates the value of the appointment of educated persons to responsible posts in the interior.

21. The Secretary's office was maintained in its full strength throughout the year. This office is now less objectionable than before, as, under the present arrangement, it has got work to do. His Highness' orders about matters of administration, which are to pass through it, are now necessarily more numerous and more important, as the Maharajah has kept in his possession all powers of guidance and control in respect both of the State and of the zemindaries.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

22. The revenue administration of the State is showing some sign of improvement. But without a full financial statement containing an account both of receipts and expenditure, the real condition of affairs cannot be properly known. The Revenue Department of the State continues to be unable to prepare a complete budget estimate owing to necessary information not being supplied from all quarters. This itself is a proof of want of vigor and order in the Administration. The account branch of the department, the creation of which was reported three years ago, continues to exist. It is doing good work in its way as a cheek to subordinate offices in matters which come before it. But its usefulness must be limited so long as a full and correct budget for the State and the zemindaries cannot be made.

23. In regard to receipts, the Maharaja is not a sufferer so far as Hill Tipperah is concerned. He gets from it almost the last realizable piece of his demand. In times of necessity he receives advances. His zemindaries, hewever, present in this respect a sad spectacle. There the tenants in collusion with the Amla rob him in every possible way, with holding payment of dues, creating rent-free holdings, concealing lands, and paying rents at generally very low rates. There are no accounts in his sherista to show either the quantities of lands held by the ryots or the amounts of jama for which they are liable. This is certainly not the picture of every estate. But in many of the mehals held khas, the general aspect is not brighter. Baksimal, a village close to Commillah, used to pay through farmers about brighter. Baksimal, a village close to commillah, used to pay through farmers about Rs. 2,200 a year. It is now managed khas and yields Rs. 500 or so instead, and yet it is as prosperous now as ever. A village not far from Chagalnaya in Noakhali, capable of yielding about Rs. 2,000 per annum, is not paying any rent for the last 10 or 12 years. In many rent suits instituted in behalf of His Highnessly decree is obtained at the nominal rate of 4 annas a kani, while the actual prevailing rate is 12 to 16 times as much. During the last two years or so, nearly 80 tanks have been dug on the Maharajahs' lands in thana Chagalnaya by men who not only did not pay for the same the usual salami or premium, but did not even take the necessary permission. Yet these tanks could not have dug without the knowledge and connivance of the local tehsildars. His Highness' zemindaries are extensive and valuable. In order that they may be saved from ruin, it is necessary that an efficient manager should be appointed. It is said that the Manager's post and the post of the Minister have not been filled up for the sake of economy. If such be the case, the value of the posts has not been duly judged.

24. the Maharaja is gradually coming to a proper sense as regards the embarrassed condition of his state and the expensive character of his over-increasing family. His debts, which were reported in previous years, have not been reduced to any appreciable extent, while his household wants are now at least three times as much as those of his predecessor. His Highness now seems to be anxious to improve the present state of things at the sacrifice, if necessary, of his personal ease and comfort. In the annual report of 1885-886, it was suggested that the rates of interest which were paid on the debts might be considerably reduced. The administration accordingly made endeavours in that direction from time to time, but never with success. During the year under report the matter was again earnestly taken in hand, and it has been known that arrangements have been made with some of the money-lenders, under which the old rates of 12 to 18 percent. per annum have been reduced to 6 percent. This has been done in respect of Rs. 2,10,000 of the debts, by which a saving of Rs. 14,000 a year has been effected. The necessary documents regarding the transactions have been executed and duly registered. Credit is due to the administration for the work so far as it is done. The work, it is hoped, will be proceeded with until the rates in respect of the remaining portion of the debts are similarly reduced.

25. During the year two ladies, related to His Highness, having died, the landed property which they had obtained from the Raj for their maintenance, reverted to the mother-estate, increasing thereby its revenue by Rs.. 6,000 a year. This circumstance and the reduction of interest - effected, as alluded to above, both permanent gains - have, with the increase of revenue under the heads of cotton and forest produce, helped in greatly removing the gloomy character of the financial prospects of the State. Indeed though a complete budget has not yet been prepared, the Maharaja has been able to from a rough estimate of the probable receipts and expenses on account of the current year, so far as Hill Tipperah and the zemindaries managed from Agartala, i.e. those not included in the jurisdiction of the Chakla of Comillah, are concerned. The estimate does not include any portion of the existing liabilities in which, among other items, is a big sum of about Rs. 12,000 due to the late minister on account of his pay. How far, therefore, it will serve any practical purpose remains to be seen. It gives, however, a surplus of Rs. 11,660, as its figures will show :

Probable receipts for 1299T.E. = 1889-90A.D.		Probable expenses for 1299T.E. = 1889-90A.D	
	Rs.		Rs.
1. From Hill Tipperah	3,04,147	1. Administration and management charges for Hill Tipperah and the zemindaries managed from Agartala	1,54,920
2. From zemindaries managed from Agartala, including a sum of Rs. 23,089 to be received from the Chakla in Commillah	1,50,060	2. Personal and household expenses of His Highness the Maharaja, including the estimate of Rs. 30,000 for repairing an old building	2,87,622
Total	4,54,207	Total	4,42,542
Deduct	4,42,542		
Balance	11,665		

26. It is true that the income of the State, such as it is now, can, under proper administration, enable the Maharajah to pay off his liabilities in a few years. This will be known from the following statement, the figures of which are believed to be very approximately correct :

Yearly receipts (in round figures).		Yearly expenses (in round figures).	
	Rs.		Rs.
From the State	3,00,000	Household and private expenses of the Maharaja	3,00,000
From the zemindaries managed from Agartala	1,26,000	Administration charges for the State, being 40 per cent. on 3,00,000	1,20,000
From the zemendaries managed from the Chakla in Comillah	4,60,000	Collection and management charges for the zemindaries, being 15 per cent. on 1,26,000 + 4,60,000 = 5,86,000 - 87,900 or say	88,000
Total	8,86,000	Government revenue and cesses	2,10,000
Deduct	7,18,000	Total	7,18,000
Net balance available for clearing debts and introducing reforms	1,68,000		

27. The total actual receipts of the state during the year under report, viz. Rs. 2,97,510 as shown in the annexed revenue return, exhibit on the whole a falling off of Rs. 39,842 as compared with the receipts of the previous year, and an increase of Rs. 40,012 as compared with the average receipts of the preceding three years. Of the twenty heads of revenue given in the return, there was total increase of Rs. 15,794 under five heads against a total decrease of Rs. 55,636 under the remaining fifteen.

28. The greatest increase was obtained from lands in the plains which yielded Rs. 52,018 against Rs. 38,266 of the previous year, and Rs. 38,998, the average of the preceding three years. This good result is said to be due to certain mehals having been assessed for the first time under the terms of their settlement. The next increase of any importance was under the head of Adda or chowkidari tax, which gave Rs. 5,241 against Rs. 4,291 of the preceding year. This is attributable partly to increase in the number of houses taxed and partly to more careful collection. Formerly the mehal was entirely held khas : now it is partially farmed out.

29. The greatest falling off was under the head of cotton, under which the sum of Rs. 96,372 was obtained against Rs. 1,28,188 of the previous year. This was due to partial failure of the crop. Indeed owing to the highly abundant produce of that year, the income was then nearly doubled. A considerable portion of that year's crop which had remained unexported was taken out and paid for along with the produce of the year under report. This helped to make the revenue more than the receipts of the preceding three years as shown in the return.

30. The decrease of Rs. 7,181 under the head of family tax comes next. This is due to the straitened condition of the hill-people caused partly by failure of crops and partly by apprehended Lushai raids. The forest revenue fell from Rs. 80,712 to Rs. 76,796 owing it is said, to the levy of fees on forest produce passing into Sylhet by water and also to insufficient rainfall for which the hill-streams by which the produce is mostly floated down dried up partially. The fall in the Feni revenue, which is collected by Government officials, is reported to be due to short rainfall and to disturbed condition of the Feni valley, in consequence of Lushai raids in 1887-88 to which the revenue in question, as shown in the return, refers. The Maharaja's share of the Feni collections for the year under review has not yet been received. The royalty on elephants caught is gradually decreasing since 1883-84. This is chiefly attributable to want of sufficient demand in the market. The rate of tax in regard to the buffalo-grazing mehals of the Bilania Division having been somewhat unduly raised, a good number of buffaloes has been taken away by their owners for being grazed in the Chittagong side of the Feni. To this circumstance and to want of vigour on the part of the collecting officers is ascribed the falling off of Rs. 1,520 under this head. The rate in question was formerly a rupee a year for a full-grown buffalo and annas eight for a calf. It is now Re. 1-8 and Re. 1 respectively. The decrease of Rs. 2,162 under the head of Khotagari or mooring tax was due to decrease in the quantities of forest produce, cotton and oil-seeds exported from the country by river. This tax which is levied on the mooring of boats, &c., in which these articles are carried, may be well included in the general export duty.

31. The fluctuations under the other heads of revenue are not important, and do not, therefore, call for any explanation.

GENERAL STATE OF POLICE, CRIME, AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

32. In its numerical strength and general distribution, the police force remained the same as before. In its functions, too, there was no change. It has the dual duty of preserving public peace and collecting revenue. Since the appointment of a Superintendent for each Division in 1886-87, there has been noticeable

improvement in the general conduct and tone of this important branch of the Administration. It will, however, be some time before a through change for the better can be effected. For, among other circumstances, the rate of pay that is allowed is a great drawback. The pay, as a rule, is Rs. 20 a month for an officer in charge of a station, and Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 for one in charge of an outpost with no prospect for pension and no extra allowance for travelling.

33. There was no noticeable change in respect of crime either in the hills or in the plains. In the former, indeed, offences do not take place often. But most of those that do occur are not reported, the police being located close to British territory among Bengalis far away from the hill villages. The Courts also are situated in the plains near British borders. It is desirable that these institutions should be removed to proper places in the interior. Their removal is sure to be followed by extension of cultivation and increase of population, which are objects of paramount importance to the country.

34. The Sub-divisional Officers have the functions of Magistrate, Judge and Collector. In the last two capacities they do not get proportionately as much work as under the first. This is chiefly owing to the facts that the revenue of most of the mehals which are let out in farm or taluk is paid in the Sudder Treasury at Agartala, and that the differences between landlords and tenants, such as are not settled amicably, are generally made subjects of complaints before criminal courts. The laws regarding civil suits are few, but they are a great deal too much in favour of landlords.

35. Besides the three sub-divisional courts, there are five courts at Agartala, viz. three original and two appellate. The latter are generally dilatory; otherwise they work pretty well. Justice is indeed fairly administered when the cases are between subjects and subjects. But when the State or any one having influence in the Durbar is one of the parties, the presiding officers of the Court seem occasionally to lose nerve.

36. As will be seen from the annexed statement No. 2, there were altogether 585 criminal cases for disposal against 598 of the previous year. Of these, 181, or nearly 31 percent., were rejected; 54 with 71 persons, remained under trial at the close of the year; and 350, with 703 persons, were tried, 401 persons, or 57 per cent. being convicted. In 234 cases, or in two cases out of every three tried, enquiry had been made by the police. who in 153 cases had arrested and brought up 282 persons, of whom 184 or 79.2 per cent. of the number tried were convicted. This was so far satisfactory. But in respect of it, there were 82 cases of appeal. In 21 of them only the sentences of the lower courts were confirmed, and in 6 the appeal was rejected; while in 41 the sentences were reversed, in 9 modified, and in the remaining 5 further enquiry was directed. Seven of the unsuccessful appellants again carried their cases up to the khas appellate court, where in one the order appealed against was reversed, in two it was modified, and in four confirmed. The whole result therefore was discreditable to the original Courts. It is not always easy for persons who are dissatisfied with the orders of the sub-divisional officers to duly prefer and conduct appeal cases at Agartala where the appellate courts are situated. This is owing to the distance of the place from the sub-divisions and to the delay which generally occurs in the disposal of cases. The matter has been brought to the notice of the Maharaja.

37. Of the total number of cases mentioned above, British subjects were concerned in 218, which shows a slight increase compared with the figure, 198, of the previous year. None of the cases had any especial interest. The number of persons for trial also rose form 213 to 257. Of this number, 223 only were tried, 153 or 68.3 per cent. being convicted - vide accompanying statement No. 3. The increase of cases noticed here is due to increase of the facility with which trade and cultivation can be carried on in the State. The former is entirely

in the hands of British subjects and the latter partly.

38. Return NO. 4 hereto appended gives an account of the civil suits that came up for hearing. The number of such suits fell from 523 to 478, which is ascribed to the re-establishment of good feeling between the landlord and tenants in a tract in which hitherto there was want of it. In 158 of these suits British subjects were concerned, viz. in 83 as plaintiffs, in 34 as defendants, while in 41 the plaintiffs and defendants were all British subjects. The entire value of the suits was Rs. 43,582, of which the sum of Rs. 7,131 only, or 16.3 per cent, was decreed. This is said to be due to a big case valued at over Rs. 24,000 having remained undisposed of. The total amount of fees realized was Rs. 2,714. There were 39 cases of appeal against the order of the lower court, which, together with 16 pending cases of the previous year, were all disposed of. In 11, the appeal was wholly decreed, and in 3 partly, while in 5 remandment was ordered; in 7 the appeal was rejected, and in the remaining 29 the decision of the lower court was upheld. In reference to these, there were 11 cases of appeal before the khas appellate court, where one of them was decreed wholly and two partially and two were remanded. In the remaining six cases, the decision of the lower court was confirmed.

JAIL.

39. As will be seen from the annexed statement No. 5, there were four jails or lock-ups in the State, containing at the close of the year 37 prisoners in all. The prisoners were, as usual, treated with leniency. Their out-door work consisted chiefly of making and repairing roads and clearing jungle. When work of this kind was not procurable, they manufactured baskets in the jails. Their earning however, is always much short of the charges that are incurred by the administration on their account.

40. The practice under which people are sometimes kept in confinement in what are called Alangs, as reported last year, is believed to continue still, but no complaint about it was received during the year.

MILITARY AND FRONTIER MATTERS.

41. Statement No. 6 (herewith submitted) shows the strength of the military establishments of the state. It will be seen therefrom that there were in the year under report 292 men, rank and file, in His Highness service. The best portion of the number was engaged on duty in the frontier guard posts, of which there were three in the Koylashar Division on the Sylhet side and one at Eksari on the Gumti towards the side of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. During the period of disturbance alluded to before in paragraph 4, additional posts were maintained in the interior.

42. There was some improvement in the condition of the force to which comparatively greater attention was paid by the administration during the year. A good quantity of ammunition was brought under a license granted by Government, and a supply of arms is also being arranged to be imported for the use of the men, as the guns now with them are mostly out of order. During the year patrol communication was established between the guards of the Koylashar Division and those of Sylhet.

EDUCATION.

43. The number of schools maintained by the state rose from 16 to 18, and that of boys attending the same from 398 to 493. With the exception of two sub-divisional schools and the school at Agartala, the institutions are all ephemeral patshalas which are not always found in working state. The Agartala School not being in

suitable condition, many of the children of the Thakur families, who were students there, have gone to Comillah for education. Their expenses are chiefly borne by the state, which pays about Rs. 100 a month on their account. This shows at once the necessity that exists for the school being improved and also the means by which the same can be effected. During the year the Jubraj visited this institution and awarded prizes to the students.

DISPENSARIES.

44. From the four charitable dispensaries of the State 5,003 out-door patients received medicines. Among the members of the military, police and the other establishments of the Administration, 1,152 persons obtained gratuitous medical treatment, of whom 1,143 were cured, five died, and four remained under treatment at the close of the year. The total daily attendance of the patients was, on the whole, 48.6. Surgical operations were performed in 249 cases and vaccine operations in 1,946. In respect of the last, a fee of four annas in each case was levied by the Administration, of which the vaccinator received, three annas as his remuneration and one anna went to the State treasury to meet such charges of the Medical Department as were incurred in connection with the work. The prevailing diseases of the year were fever, diarrhoea, dysentery, worms and skin affections. Sporadic cases of cholera also occurred at times.

POST-OFFICE.

45. The Government post-office attached to the agency continued to work well. Money-orders and insured covers of the value of Rs. 83,785 and Rs. 3,815 respectively, or Rs. 87,600 on the whole, were issued during the year, against Rs. 78,842 of the former and Rs. 9,856 of the latter or Rs. 88,698 on the aggregate of the previous year. The rise in the number of money-orders, and the fall in that of insured covers, were both due to want of supply of currency notes. The value of money-orders paid by the office fell from Rs, 52,606 to Rs. 31,116 owing to the Administration on the score of cost not availing itself of the post-office as largely as before in the matter of getting remittances from the sub-divisions. Two new post-offices may now be advantageously opened in the State, namely, one at Sonamura and one at Koylashar. But the Administration does not seem inclined to view with favour any proposal on the subject.

STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

46. The state of communications in the country is not good and there was no attempt made by the Administration during the year to improve it. Lahars or hill-paths were cut as usual. But the sub-divisional stations are not yet connected with one another by roads, nor are they connected with Agartala. In the rainy season two of them are accessible by rivers which run through British territory. But the Hill Tipperah portions of these rivers contain many snags and other obstructions for which they are not easily passable.

47. Of the two roads that were constructed in 1887-88, as noticed in the annual report for that year, the one which passes through the Chanddagram hills has been kept in a fair condition, but the other has been abandoned. The latter, indeed, was not made in the form of a regular road. It was at best a foot-path passing through precipitious hills and therefore not much used; consequently it was blocked up by jungle soon. It is necessary that Koylashar and Dharmanagar, between which this path was cut, should be connected by road.

BOUNDARY MATTERS.

48. During the year additional pillars were erected on the line of boundary between Chagalnaya in Nokhali

and Hill Tipperah. This line is now sufficiently marked. In the hill tracts on the Sylhet side, the boundary posts are generally very far from one another, a circumstance which sometimes leads to disputes. In a few cases the administration has already questioned the correctness of the line so demarcated. It appears that the lands therein concerned have all along been within the jurisdiction of the state, though situated outside its boundary as defined and settled. This latter fact did not hitherto come to the notice of the district authorities, as the lands were covered with jungle. It is necessary therefore that inter-visible posts should be erected on the line to prevent the possibility of further disputes being raised.

MISCELLANEOUS.

49. The rule under which no excise shop is allowed to stand within a mile of the common boundary of Hill Tipperah and British territory was found in a few instances to be disregarded on either side. the facts have been brought to the notice of the proper authorities, and it is hoped that the shops, which are wrongly situated, will be duly removed. The rule is a salutary one and should be strictly observed both in this state and in the adjacent districts.

50. The head-clerk of this office, Babu Govind Chandra Das, is a very trustworthy officer. He performed his duties throughout the year with great care, intelligence and zeal.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT
OF THE POLITICAL AGENCY, HILL TIPPERAH, FOR THE YEAR 1889-90

Note about Annual Report of the Political Agency of Hill Tipperah for the year 1889-90.

THE general administration of the State was found during the preceding years to be unsatisfactory. The fact was duly taken notice of by the Government, and the Maharajah was advised by the local officers to take steps for effecting reforms. The advice was not always acted upon faithfully, and so, in order that a proper sense of his duty might be aroused, the Maharajah became for a time a subject of notice in the official Gazette, in which Resolutions on the annual reports of the Political Agent were ordered to be published. His Highness' acts and omissions in reference to the administration of the State which were not conducive to his benefit were thus exposed. The Maharajah took this to his heart, and on the advent of Sir Steurt Bayley caused a letter to be addressed to his Government, requesting among other things that the publication of the Resolutions might be discontinued. His Honour acceded to the request, and directed that the remarks and advices that might be suggested by the annual reports of the Political Agency should be communicated to the Maharajah privately. The course adopted under this direction was duly followed for more than a year, but no good result ensued. Government then saw the uselessness of Resolutions being recorded year after year, and decided to take more direct and active steps. During his visit to Chittagong in May 1889 Sir Steuart Bayley made local enquiries regarding the affairs of this State, and being satisfied that the time had come for some active measures being adopted, decided to personally address the Maharajah on the subject. The Maharajah paid due attention to the letter which he received from His Honour in August last, and which was made over to him by the Political Agent. He expressed his intention for taking steps for better administration of his State; but he soon changed his mind. A lengthy and somewhat unpleasant correspondence then followed, which resulted at the end in the appointment of a Minister in accordance with the views of Government. This appointment, which was settled and decided upon in the month of March last, was the chief event of the year. The appointment was, however, actually made in April following.

2. Since my transfer to the services of the Raj, the post of Assistant Political Agent of this State has been kept in abeyance, the entire political charge being vested exclusively in the Political Agent.

3. The Maharajah selected me freely, and has given me full powers of administration in respect of the State and the zemindaries. I have only been a few short weeks in charge, during which I have reformed the Minister's office, dividing it into proper departments, and placing one or more departments in charge of a responsible officer, who is to work under me as Head Assistant. I have commenced preparing a budget estimate of receipts and expenditure of the current year, and after the completion of the work I propose to look into the business of the zemindaries.

4. As I had to remain at Agartala for nearly the whole of the cold weather to keep myself acquainted with the proceedings of the Durbar in connection with the advice of government about the management of the State, my tours were not so full as those of the previous years. In April last year I visited Sonomura and inspected the subdivisional office, the jail, and other institutions of the place. In May I went to Chittagong on the occasion of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's visit to that place. In August and September I visited the Kodalia ghat, the Lohar ghat, and a few other ghats or toll-stations in which dues on forest produce floated down rivers and other water-courses are collected, and I also visited the Sonamura subdivision again. In January and February I went on an extensive tour up the Gumti, and visited all the guard-posts and police-stations in that part of the country, and also several hill villages and hill markets. The total number of days occupied in these and other short tours was 72.

WEATHER AND CROPS.

5. There was comparatively very scanty rainfall at Agartala during the year. The total fall registered was 59.60, against 73.12 of the previous year and 76.35 the average of the preceding three years. The rain was particularly deficient in April, May, July, and August, as will be seen from the following table :

Months	Average fall of 1885-86, 1886-87, and 1887-88.	Total fall in 1888-89.	Total fall in 1889-90.
April	5.47	16.71	7.27
May	9.12	14.33	7.78
June	15.17	10.80	12.18
July	11.00	8.99	4.44
August	14.41	14.02	4.79
September	9.74	6.88	7.46
October	3.25	...	8.37
November	.49	.45	3.23
December	...	...	...
January	1.01	.42	.30
February	.50	.52	...
March	6.19	...	3.78
Total	76.35	73.12	59.60

6. The public health was greatly affected by the deficiency in the rainfall. Cholera broke out in several places at the commencement of the winter, and did not entirely disappear till some time after the close of the year. A considerable number of people succumbed to the fell diseases both in the plains and in the hills of this State.

7. Among the ordinary crops of the State, sugarcane, chillies, and oil-seeds fared tolerably well. Jute cultivation has been commenced in some parts of the plains, and has been found to be profitable. Of the two staple crops of the country, viz. paddy and cotton, the latter, which is grown only on the hills, yielded a fair outturn; but owing to the dryness of the weather the former, viz. paddy, suffered a great deal, especially in the plains. The yield of the crop was considerably below the average. The market price of rice therefore rose high, as will be seen below :

FOOD GRAINS.	Average of 1885-86, 1886-87 and 1887-88.			Price in 1888-89.			Price in 1889-90.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Rice (best sort)	3	4	0	4	2	0	4	14	0
Rice (common)	2	5	0	2	0	0	2	14	0
Wheat	3	6	0	5	8	0	6	10	0
Gram	3	0	0	3	8	0	3	8	0
Salt	3	10	0	4	4	0	4	6	0
Labour									
Skilled :-									
Mason	14	10	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Smith	14	10	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Carpenter	14	10	0	15	0	0	15	0	0
Unskilled :-									
Agriculturist	7	12	0	8	0	0	8	0	0
Day labourer	6	0	0	6	0	0	6	0	0

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, AND OTHER INTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE.

8. Nothing noticeable occurred during the year under this head. There was, however, some influx of Chakmas from the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Many people of that class are yet willing to come from there and settle in this State. No errigtation out of the country is known to have taken place.

MINES AND MANUFACTURES.

9. Some coal mines have been found in this State, but they are far in the interior of the hills, and are not easily accessible. They are not therefore worked. The manufactures of the country are few. The most interesting of them are some cotton fabrics, such as poeris, pachras, etc., as mentioned in the previous reports. The other manufactures are dug-outs and bamboo mats and baskets, which are made in different forms and are sold to Bengali tradesmen, who export them in large quantities.

TRADE.

10. The trade of the country is gradually improving, as is evidenced by the fact that the number of bazars and markets is on the increase. Almost every outlying thana and police-outpost has now a bazar attached to it. The tradesmen are all Bengalis. The natives of the soil live only be agriculture. Some Reangs, Chakmas, and other hillmen have, however, learnt to make wood-cutting a profitable profession. They gather bamboos, timber, canes, and other forest produce, and sell them to Bengalis. The Chakmas and Reangs are the chief manufacturers of dug-outs, which they make in the interior of the hills close to the source of the Gumti, by which they float them down. The chief exporters of dug-outs are the people of the districts of Tipperah and Noakhally. The other principal exports are cotton and oil-seeds. which are grown by the hill-people in their jums. The rates of the export duty continue to be high. They are hardly less than 25 per cent. ad valorem, while those on cotton and oil-seeds are as high as 40 per cent. The total amount of export duty realised during the

year under all heads was Rs. 1,87,114. The entire value of the export trade of the year was therefore about Rs. 7,48,000, against Rs. 6,41,000 of the previous year and Rs. 6,83,000 the average of the preceding three years.

11. The principal imports are salt, dried fish, hardware, piece goods, pottery, and fancy things of various kinds. No import duty is levied by the Administration, and there are no statistics available from which the value of the import trade can be ascertained.

STATE OF PUBLIC FEELING.

12. The want of any Resolution of Government on the Annual Administration Report of the Agency successively for two years, and the fact that some confidential correspondence passed between the Maharajah and the Government after His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's visit to Chittagong, produced a sense of unrest in the public mind. The people caused rumours of different sort to be produced and circulated, some finding fault with Government for its inaction in the past years, others blaming it most undeservedly, attributing to it sinister motives. The native press, both of Calcutta and mofussil, busily kept for a time the matters of the State under agitation. It received its inspiration, no doubt, from interested parties, whose main object was to denounce the action of the local officers of Government and to make the general public believe that the Government had been misinformed regarding the real affairs of the State. It is a noticeable fact, however, that all the agitation which was caused by the papers produced no effect on the mind of His Highness, who in the end properly accepted the advice of Government as regards the course of action he should follow for the due administration of his affairs.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES.

13. During the year no change of any importance took place in the Administration. In the zemindary, however, and additional Dewan was appointed and placed in charge of the Chakla at Comillah. The old Dewan of the Chakla was for nearly the whole of the year absent from Comillah, being employed on State business in Calcutta.

14. My appointment was made in April last, as mentioned before. It does not therfore properly come under notice here, as this note is for events of the year ending 31st March last.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

15. The principal matter for notice under this head is the plan devised for the purpose of liquidating the old debts by reducing the rates of interest and causing the whole of the interest and a portion of the principal to be deducted from the yearly jama of the farms granted to the creditors. In my last report it was mentioned that there had been effected a saving of Rs. 14,000 by causing a reduction of the rate of interest from 12 per cent. per annum and upwards to 6 per cent. During the year under notice a further saving of about Rs. 10,000 was caused in this respect. Formerly the total amount of interest paid was Rs. 60,000, now it is about Rs. 36,000 only. Under the present arrangements, under which the creditors receive out of the income of their farms the total amount of their interest and also a portion of their principal, the entire debts, it is said, will be liquidated in about 11 years.

16. No proper settlement of revenue can be made unless a full and careful survey of the lands have been effected and the rights of the tenants have been recorded. But the survey operations of the entire zemindary

will necessarily be very expensive, so much so that the State could ill afford to bear the cost at present. The matter is under the careful consideration of the Administration, which is most anxious to effect a proper settlement of the zemindaries as soon as practicable.

17. At present nearly one-fourth of the zemindaries are let out in farms. The longest term granted is about 11 years.

18. Three or four years ago the total amount of debts, including arrears of pay due to officers and servants and arrears due to purveyors, etc., was more than 10 lakhs of rupees. It is now believed to be reduced to below 9 lakhs. Of these between 5 and 6 lakhs are bonded debts, on which interest is paid. It is estimated that if proper curtailment of expenditure can be effected and no unnecessary expenditure is incurred, the income of the estate, such as it is at present, will be sufficient for the entire debts being paid off in the course of a few years only.

19. As will be seen from the annexed revenue return No. 1, the total actual receipts derived from all sources in the State, exclusive of the zemindaries, was Rs. 3,12,465, against Rs. 2,97,510 of the previous year and Rs. 2,88,116 the average of the preceding three years, showing thus an increase of Rs. 14,955 and Rs. 24,349 respectively. The largest increase was obtained from family-tax in the hills, which yielded Rs. 28,436, against Rs. 20,986. This good result was due to greater tact and care on the part of the collecting officers. Land revenue also yielded an increase of Rs. 1,955, the buffalo grazing mehal of Rs. 1,190, the khotagari mehal of Rs. 720, and the excise mehal of Rs. 539, all due to renewed settlements. There was an appreciable increase of about Rs. 4,000 under the head of cotton and oil-seeds, due chiefly to more careful collection and to the successful issue of some cases of cotton-smuggling. Law and Justice also gave some increase under each of the subheads of fines, stamp-fees, and process-fees. This is attributable partly to increase of cases, and partly to more regularity and strictness in the collection of fines and fees. Out of the 20 heads of revenue, there was a total increase of Rs. 22,521 under 14 heads.

20. The remaining six heads of revenue gave on the whole Rs. 7,566 less than their income of the previous year. Of these the falling off under tax on forest produce, amounting to Rs. 5,347, is noticeable. This decrease is ascribed chiefly to natural causes, such as drought, outbreak of cholera, etc., which prevented people from coming to and working in the hills as exporters of forest produce.

21. Besides the income of the State as mentioned above, it is believed that a sum of about Rs. 1,50,000 was obtained by the Maharajah out of the proceeds of his zemindaries and spent on his household and other purposes.

POLICE.

22. There was no change during the year in the police establishment of the State, nor was there any noticeable change in the mode in which work is done by this department. Their powers and distribution also remained the same as before.

23. During the year crime was as usual small, and there was no disturbance of the public peace, If, as is the case, the several police-stations and the subdivisional offices were not situated close to the borders of British territory, the number of criminal cases reported would have been considerably smaller. Of the total number of cases which are enquired into and tried in this State, about 33 per cent. are concerning British subjects who

enter this State either as tradesmen or as cultivators or as exporters of forest produce, and find various occasions for quarrels with the subjects of His Highness. The courts from their situation are too easily accessible to the Bengalis, by whom many groundless cases are instituted, while most of the real cases which occur in the interior among the hill people are not reported owing (1) to the distance of the courts from the places of occurrence, and (2) to the officers being Bengalis, with whom the hill people have no great sympathy.

24. As before, the police have still, revenue work to do in addition to their proper business, viz. the preservation of the public place. In almost every thana a sum, varying from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000 is collected a year as export duties on forest produce carried by land routes, as grazing-tax, as revenue for thatching grass mehal, and also, in some cases, as land revenue. The head officers of the police establishment have also to supervise the collection of cotton revenue, which on the average is about Rs. 25,000 a year for each subdivision.

25. The police are now paid their salaries more regularly than before, and so stricter discipline can now be enforced; but there is yet one great drawback. The rates of the salary paid are most inadequate. The Superintendents, of whom there is one in each subdivision, do not get more than Rs. 50 a month each, yet the charge cannot be increased without unduly increasing the percentage of the cost of the general administration on the annual income of the State. The population being sparse and the country being extensive, several police-stations are required to be maintained; and though the charge for each station is small, amounting on the average to about Rs. 48 a month, the total expenditure incurred is by no means so when compared either to the amount of revenue actually collected by the police or to the amount of work done by them for the purpose of general protection and preservation of the public peace. There are now 19 thanas, including outposts, maintained in the different parts of the State, instead of 18 reported previously, one new outpost having been established during the year.

26. The annexed returns of cases show the amount of work done during the year in the several courts of the State.

27. Including 54 cases of the previous year, the total number of criminal cases which came before the courts was 603; of which 220, or 36.4 per cent., where rejected, and 35 remained pending at the close of the year. In the remaining 348 cases which were tried, 795 accused persons appeared or were brought before the courts, of whom 423, or 53.2 per cent., were convicted, 331 discharged or acquitted, 4 died or escaped, and 37 remained under trial. Among these cases 196 were concerning British subjects, of whom 231 were defendants. Of this number, 137 or 59.3 per cent., were convicted.

28. In connection with the above there were 102 cases of appeal, in 53 of which the sentances of the lower courts were confirmed, in 19 they were reversed, in 22 modified, and in 4 re-enquiry was ordered, the remaining four appeals being rejected. The dissatisfied. parties carried 25 of these appeal cases to the Khas or the chief appellate court, in which in 12 they were wholly or partly successful, the orders appealed against being upset or modified.

29. In the Civil side the total number of suits for disposal was 472, as shown in the annexed return No. 4. In 135 of these suits British subjects were concerned, viz. in 78 as plaintiffs and in 31 as defendants, while in the remaining 26 all the parties were British subjects. The total value of the suits in round figures was Rs. 26,500 of which Rs. 15,500, or 58.4 per cent., was decreed. The total amount of stamp-fees realised was Rs.

3,370. There were altogether 92 appeal cases in the Civil side, viz. 72 before the lower appellate court and 20 before the Khas Appellate Court. All of them were duly disposed of. In 28 cases of the former and in 6 of the latter appellants were wholly or partly successful.

30. Compared with the figure of the previous year, there was no noticeable fluctuation in the number of cases, either in the Criminal or in the Civil side. The courts are gradually gaining the confidence of the people, but there is yet great room for improvement. the Jubaraj Bhadur, as the Chief Judge of the Khas Appellate Court, inspected all the courts in Agartala, as he did in the previous year.

JAIL.

31. There were, as before, four jails or lock-ups, which on the whole had 73 prisoners at the close of the year. As usual the prisoners were treated with indulgence. There were few occasions for disciplinary punishments being awarded. The general health of the prisoners was on the whole good throughout the year. Out of a daily number of 32.61, 188 had to be admitted into hospital during the year, or .51 a day only. Medical aid is promptly given to prisoners when they fall sick, and the rules about the diet of patients and their exemption from labour are carefully attended to.

32. The jail income is small, and is far from sufficient to meet the expenses incurred. The income, such as it is, is derived, as usual, from two sources, viz. the price of the outdoor labour of the prisoners and the price of the manufactures made within the jails. As outdoor labourers, the prisoners are chiefly employed in road-making and jungle-cutting, and the manufactures made in the jails are chiefly bamboo mats and baskets of different sorts and chairs made of cane.

33. No case of confinement in *Alangs* was brought to notice during the year.

MILITARY AND FRONTIER MATTERS.

34. The frontier was perfectly peaceful during the year, nor was there any internal disturbance within His Highness' territory; but the guard-posts were nevertheless duly garrisoned in the raiding season, and four outlying posts were newly established in advanced positions on the southern frontier to collect information regarding any movements of the Lushais, and to keep particular watch in that side, which, from the events of the preceding year in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, was considered to be in need of careful protection. Happily the part of the country in question was perfectly in peace. The men of these advanced posts kept up patrol communication during the raiding months, and gave reassurance to the hill people. The arrangements made for the purpose were satisfactory.

35. As will be seen from the annexed statement No. 6, there were 349 men, rank and file, in His Highness' service during the year, including the men of His Highness' bodyguard. The wants of these men are now more attentively supplied than before. They are now more regularly paid, and comparatively better supplied with arms and dresses. One hundred new guns with bayonets and as many pouches and belts were imported during the year for the purpose. The drill and discipline of the men also are now more carefully looked after. Between the guard-posts maintained in the Koylashar division of this State and those established in the adjacent parts of the district of Sylhet, patrol communication was duly opened and kept up during the cold weather.

EDUCATION.

36. There were 16 schools and patshalas attended by 467 students, against 18 schools and patshalas and 493 students of the previous year. The working of these institutions is not altogether satisfactory. Regularity is not strictly observed either in the attendance of the pupils or in the selection of the text-books. For inspection also, no system is duly followed. Arrangements, however, are now being made for the removal of these wants; arrangements are also being made for the Agartala school being raised to the status of an Entrance school. If this institution is so improved, all the children of the Thakur families, who have now to go to Comillah and elsewhere to persecute their studies, will be able to take their admission here.

37. During the year the Bara Thakur Bhadur visited Calcutta on the occasion of His Royal Highness Prince Albert Victor's arrival there, and stayed in the metropolis for some weeks. He has been much benefited by his visits to Calcutta, and is now capable of taking care of himself and maintaining his position and dignity outside the limits of His Highness the Maharajah's dominions.

DISPENSARIES.

38. There were four charitable dispensaries at work during the year, viz. one at the head-quarters station of each of the four subdivisions of the State. The total number of outdoor patients who received medicines from those dispensaries was 6,592, against 5,003 of the previous year. Among the members of the several establishments of the Administration, 805 persons were treated in these dispensaries. Of them 796 were cured or relieved and 9 died. None remained under treatment at the close of the year. The total daily attendance of both the out and in-patients was on the whole 55.64. Surgical cases were 236 in number and vaccine operations 916 against 249 and 1,946 respectively of the previous year.

39. There is an additional charitable dispensary attached to his Highness' residence, which distributes medicines gratis to the general public as well as to the members of His Highness' household. It is a large institution having two departments, one of which is under charge of the State physician, who is an allopathic practitioner, and the other is under a homeopath. It is kept open both day and night, and the work done in it is heavy.

40. The prevailing diseases of the year were, as usual, fever, diarrhoea, dysentery, and skin affections. Cases of cholera also occurred frequently, especially in November and the subsequent months.

POST-OFFICE

41. There is only one post-office in the State, viz. that which is attached to the Political Agency, and which is managed by Government. The work done in this institution is being expanded year after year, and so with its usefulness its importance is being gradually increased. This is clear from the fact that Rs. 90,553 was remitted from here during the year in money orders and Rs. 5,840 in insured covers, against Rs. 83,785 and Rs. 3,815 respectively of the previous year; while the amount of money-orders paid in the office was Rs. 34,480, against Rs. 31,116 reported last year. The Imperial Postal Department proposed to have a few additional post-offices established in the interior of the State. The Durbar did not view the proposal with favour, but to remove public inconvenience undertook to effect the delivery by its own establishment of all covers intended for parties living far in the interior of the hills, which the postmen could not conveniently visit.

STATE OF COMMUNICATIONS.

42. There was no attempt made by the Administration during the year to improve the state of the communications of the country, which therefore remained as indifferent as before. Hill paths were of course cut as usual during the winter to allow the hill peons and sepoys to pass from the capital of the State to the several posts and offices in the interior, and also to the principal hill villages. These paths were cut by the hillmen themselves free of cost. The work, however, was done according to the instructions, and under the supervision, of the local officers of the State.

43. In the capital of the country, and also in the subdivisional stations, there are adequate means for communications. The roads in existence there are sufficient in number and dimensions, but unfortunately they are not always kept in good condition. The road, about six miles in length, which connects Agartala with the Comillah road in the district of Tipperah, was repaired during the year.

BOUNDARY MATTERS.

44. Some of the posts marking the boundary between Hill Tipperah and British territory are not correctly situated, being placed outside the boundary line in either way. These posts are sometimes respected by the people and sometimes not. This anomaly should be rectified. The amount of wrong suffered by each State in consequence of the inaccurate situation of the posts is, however, not great.

45. The eastern boundary of this State, which prior to 1874 had been in an unsettled condition, was in that year defined by the Government of Bengal, and the river Longai was fixed as the eastern boundary. This boundary, however, has not yet been formally recognised by the Durbar. Before 1851 the boundary of the State in that side was as far east as the river Dhaleswari, while still previously it extended further to the east. Since 1874, however, the Administration is not exercising any jurisdiction beyond the river Longai. It is said that the country watered by this river (Longai) is a great hunt of wild elephants, and that on its banks can be found valuable forest produce, which if allowed to be cut and floated down the river and passed through the reserved forests of the district of Sylhet would prove to be a great source of income to this State. The Durbar would therefore like to have the whole matter laid before Government for its consideration.

MISCELLANEOUS.

46. The rule under which no excise-shop can be established within a mile of the common boundary of Hill Tipperah and British territory is reported to be not strictly observed in the district of Noakhally, where the Parashuram grog-shop, the objectionable situation of which was brought to notice more than a year ago, is still occupying its former site.

47. Babu Govinda Chandra Das, The head clerk of the Political Agency, who is holding his present appointment for the last 11 years, continued to discharge his duties satisfactorily. He is a careful, intelligent, and trustworthy officer, and deserves encouragement.

30th June 1890.

UMA KANT DAS,
Late Assistant Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,

No. 210-XVI-23, dated Comillah, the 5th July 1890.
From - R. T. GREER, ESQ, Officiating Political Agent, Hill Tipperah,
To - The Commissioner of the Chittagong Division.

I HAVE the honour to forward a note which has been prepared by Rai Uma Kant Das Bahadur, late Assistant Political Agent, on the administration of Hill Tipperah for the year 1889-90.

2. The note contains a reference to the chief incident of the year, the Political Agent's dealings with the Maharajah which preceded the appointment of a Minister. The transactions immediately leading to this appointment have formed the subject of correspondence, which is now before Government. It seems inadvisable to repeat or summarise the details in this report.

3. The post of Political Agent was held by Mr. Collins from the beginning of the year. I received charge from him on the 7th August 1889, and continued in office until the close of the year. Babu Uma Kant Das held the post of Assistant Political Agent throughout the year.

TOURS.

4. The Political Agent's tour in the State was limited to one visit, which I paid to Agartala in August (11 days), my time then being chiefly occupied in discussions with the Maharajah. The details of this visit are given in my letter of the 13th August 1889 to the Chief secretary, Government of Bengal, and accompanying note. During these few days I visited the jail, dispensary, criminal court, registration office, and schools. Owing to the dearth of officers at Comillah and press of work in the office of the Magistrate-Collector, I was unable to make any tour through the State in the cold weather, the Commissioner having considered it undesirable that for any length of time I should absent myself from the Sadr office for this purpose.

The Assistant Political Agent spent 72 days on tour. Throughout a great part of the winter his attendance at Agartala was necessary in connection with the dealings between the Political Agent and Maharajah, and I felt obliged therefore to detain him at his headquarters.

5. Towards the close of the year the Maharajah formally applied for the services of Babu Uma Kant Das to be Minister of Hill Tipperah, and in accordance with the orders of government on the 15th of April I relieved him of his duties as Assistant Political Agent.

6. Before delivering over charge of his office Babu Uma Kant arranged to prepare the annual report as usual. It seemed improper to delay the transfer of his services for this object, and I have been dependent on him while holding the post of Minister for information regarding the year's administration. My own acquaintance with Hill Tipperah relates chiefly to the observance of faults in the administration. These I have referred to in detail in the correspondence relating to my deputation to Agartala in August and the revival of the post of Minister.

7. Reference to the improvements effected by the appointment of a Minister would be premature. The officer began work in the middle of April, and as stated in his note, there have been various changes carried out since then in the distribution of work in the Maharajah's office. These improvements do not fall within the scope of the report for 1889-90. It is hoped that the current year will show advances in all branches of administration.

CROPS.

8. Statistics have not been supplied regarding the outturn of rice in the past and previous years. Babu Uma Kant traces the rise in the price of this commodity to the deficient rainfall in April, May, July, and August. The extension of jute cultivation in the district of Tipperah caused a rise in the price of rice throughout the plains, dhan land being utilised in many places for jute, and cultivators being compelled to purchase rice for home consumption. A similar influences apparently affected prices in Hill Tipperah, the year being specially favourable for cultivators in the plains. The increased revenue from cotton and oil-seeds tends to show that in the hills also the outturn was unusually large.

MINES AND MANUFACTURES.

9. The existence of coal has been ascertained. It seems probable that various minerals are forthcoming in the hills. The absence of roads is a serious hindrance to the trade of the State : improvements are much needed in this respect to open up the country and develop its resources. The export duties on cotton, oil-seeds, and forest produce are unreasonably high. In spite of these hindrances the value of exports has increased from Rs. 6,41,000 in 1888 to Rs. 7,48,000 in the past year.

REVENUE.

10. The statements supplied by the Maharajah's office show an increase of Rs. 14,955 in the revenue from all sources, a decrease appearing under the heads of taxes on forest produce (Rs. 5,347), rents on markets (Rs. 348), thatching grass (Rs. 266), Kazai mehal (Rs. 207), Adda mehal (Rs. 576), and miscellaneous (Rs. 822). The heavy falling off in the revenue from forest produce is assigned to the unhealthiness of the year. The family tax apparently does not press heavily on the people. The increase under this head is satisfactory. The results tend to show some care on the part of officials in realising and accounting for collections. Under all heads there is much room for improvement.

POLICE.

11. Babu Uma Kant refers in his note to the inadequate salaries allowed to the police. According to the information which I have received from time to time the irregularity of payments is the chief fault. The Minister, it is expected, will bring about improvements in both respects. The want of sympathy between the natives of the country and the Bengalis has been noticed in connection with the objection of the hill people to utilise the law courts and seek redress at the hands of Bengali Magistrates. The education of Thakurs and their more extensive employment in offices of trust are necessary measures in the improvement of the administration of the State. The establishment of petty Magistrates in central villages in the hills would be of much service to the inhabitants.

CRIMINAL AND CIVIL JUSTICE.

12. The percentage of convictions in the criminal courts is unduly low, 53.2 per cent. Twenty-nine per cent. of the accused were British subjects, and of these 59.3 per cent. were convicted. 18 per cent. only of the cases were reversed on appeal. British subjects were concerned in 28 per cent. of the civil suits. It is satisfactory to notice that the Jubraj has taken an interest in the working of the courts. The more active interference of the Jubraj and Bara Thakur in public affairs would be an advantage to the State.

JAIL.

13. The report speaks favourably of the work under this heading. The arrangements at the Sadr jail were satisfactory at the time of my visit (August), and I found no cause for complaint.

EDUCATION.

14. The falling off in the number of students is not explained, and improvements are needed in the working of schools in the State. The creation of an Entrance school at Agartala will be an advantage to the Thakurs and others who are unable or unwilling to send their children for education out of Hill Tipperah. I found the existing school in a fairly prosperous state.

DISPENSARIES.

15. I inspected the dispensary at Nya Havelee. There was little provision made for indoor patients : apparently outdoor patients chiefly are treated.

POST-OFFICE

16. The Maharajah's objection to open post-offices throughout the State is much to be regretted. It is hoped that time will overcome this prejudice. The business transacted at the Agartala office shows its advantages to the public, and the establishment of branch offices would help to civilise and encourage trade in the country. It is proposed to open telegraphic communication between Brahmunberiah and Comillah. A branch line to Agartala could be constructed without difficulty and through connection be effected with Cachar.

COMMUNICATIONS.

17. The absence of good roads is one of the most serious wants in the State. The Agartala-Comillah road is in fair order. The extension of similar works to the subdivison and through the hills would be an immense encouragement to trade.

18. The question raised regarding the eastern boundary of the State may form the subject for further correspondence. It seems useless to discuss the matter in this report. Paragraph 3 of letter 7 P. dated 2nd January 1874, from the Secretary to the Government of India to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, deals with the point, and contains a general statement of the views of Government.

EXCISE.

19. The correspondence in my office does not show that any action has been taken by the authorities of Hill Tipperah within any recent date to obtain the removal of Parshuram liquor-shop. The subject will duly receive attention. There seems no cause for difficulties arising in the matter. The frontier is a serious source of trouble to the excise-officers in the district of Tipperah, the falling off in the revenue being assigned by many to smuggling in Hill Tipperah.

ADMINISTRATION.

20. The note supplies no information regarding the revenues of the zemindaries outside Hill Tipperah, and so far little or no improvement has taken place in them. I thoroughly agree with Baboo Uma Kant Das that a survey and settlement of rights is absolutely necessary in order to restore order in this ill-managed property.

The condition of the debts has been set forth in the note accompanying my letter of the 31st August to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal. In it I have expressed my views regarding the alleged reduction of claims and the urgent need for reforms. Arrangements might be made by Government hereafter for the gradual payment of the expenses of the survey and settlement operations, and the Minister be thereby able to carry out the measure within a limited period. I hope to see these measures undertaken at an early date, and consider that the survey should be on a scale sufficiently large to complete the work in one season. The absence of any budget account is a noticeable feature in the statement submitted by the Maharajah's office. Babu Uma Kant Das refers to an alleged expenditure of Rs. 1,50,000 out of the proceeds from the zemindaries in addition to the income from Hill Tipperah. In the absence of any details the figures cannot be checked. There is no information regarding the actual financial condition of the State. In future the Minister will prepare an annual budget. The evils of the present system have been subject of comment from year to year, and may now escape further notice.

21. The delay in the submission of the note and these remarks is due to the cause mentioned in paragraph 6. Babu Uma Kant availed himself of leave of absence for some weeks, and deferred the submission of his note until his return at the beginning of July. I regret that I cannot supply any useful information from my personal observations in Hill Tipperah.

22. I am glad to be able to endorse the favorable remarks which have been made by my predecessor regarding the ability, energy, and tact of Babu Uma Kant Das, and his thorough knowledge of the State and its shortcomings. His experience as Assistant Political Agent has made him acquainted with the various forces at work in the State, and he has entered on his new duties well aware of the difficulties of the work before him. I trust that results will show that he possesses sufficient strength of character to beat down mischievous opposition, and carry out the reforms which are needed throughout the Maharajah's possessions.

Statement showing the amount of revenue derived from all sources in 1889-90

Serial number.	SOURCES OF REVENUE	Average receipts for the three years, 1885-86, 1886-87, and 1887-88.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1888-89.	Receipts in whole rupees in 1889-90.	AS COMPARED WITH 1888-89.		REMARKS.
					Increase	Decrease	
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
1.	Land revenue from plain lands	39,988	52,018	53,973	1,955	...	
2.	Family tax in the hills	24,642	20,986	28,436	7,450	...	
3.	Tax on forest produce	75,914	76,796	71,449	...	5,347	
4.	Do. on the Fenny	10,082	5,063	7,507	2,442	...	
5.	Do on cotton and oil seeds	87,266	96,372	1,00,180	3,808	...	
6.	Royalty on elephants caught	13,438	4,955	5,552	597	...	
7.	Buffallo-grazing mehal	3,020	2,904	4,094	1,190	...	
8.	Khotagari mehal	3,213	1,706	2,426	720	...	
9.	Kazai (kazifee) mehal	327	574	367	...	207	
10.	Rents on markets	1,233	1,789	1,441	...	348	
11.	Law and justice - fines	3,822	2,647	3,601	954	...	
12.	Ditto Ditto stamp and court fees	8,972	8,515	10,126	1,611	...	
13.	Ditto ditto - process fees	2,191	2,900	3,014	114	...	
14.	Ditto ditto - cattle pounds	1,626	1,602	1,760	158	...	
15.	Ditto ditto - abkari (excise)	1,893	2,072	2,611	539	...	
16.	Thatching grass mehal	...	7,404	7,138	...	266	
17.	Nazars	907	351	1,296	945	...	
18.	Adda (chowkidari-tax) mehal	3,962	5,241	4,665	...	576	
19.	Registration	2,058	1,589	1,627	38	...	
20.	Miscellaneous	3,562	2,024	1,202	...	822	
	Total	2,88,116	2,97,510	3,12,465	22,521	7,566	Increase on The whole of Rs. 14,955